Agriculture - 1935
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Alabama.

# Control Dooms 'Farm Slavery'

Advertiser

## Gordon Praises 'Three A,' Bankhead Cotton Act; Plantations Rehabilitated

10-1-35

The triple A and the Bankhead cotton control act have brought the farmers of Alabama and the South out of economic slavery and have taught them how to raise 30 per cent more cotton per acre, according to Frank Gordon, cotton grower and farmer of Lowndes County, who visited Montgomery Monday.

"It is true that the AAA and the Bankhead act are not perfect," said Mr Gordon in discussion of the situation. "I am a farmer and while we suffered from drouth in Lowndes County I am going to make more than my allotment and I will have to buy gin certificates. In other words I am going to net approximately $25 a bale for cotton which I never should have raised.

"The American farmer is the only man in the world who could have survived under past practices. He cannot survive in the present state of world affairs if past practices are resorted to. In the past the farmer sold what he made at a price made for him by the buyer. He bought what he needed at a price made for him by the seller. He managed to survive with bare necessities under the old system but he would not last a year under present conditions.

"I am unsympathetic to the idea that the American farmer is losing his foreign markets because he is getting a living wage price for his cotton. Why should the American (or should I say Southern farmer?) sell his cotton at a price at or below what it cost to make it to provide a trade balance for the Nation because of sales to foreign nations? That very fetish has kept the Southern cotton grower in economic slavery nearly every year of cotton production. A foreign trade balance is a good thing for the American people. But if it has to be achieved through slavery of the cotton grower, I say let's not do it and live at home and grow something else if we have to.

"I know there is some unrest among farmers who have made more than their allotment of cotton. But it is nothing to the unrest that would have been caused if we had had no triple A and the Bankhead act and had made from 18,000,000 to 20,000,000 bales of cotton and had to take five cents for it.

"Hairy vetch and Austrian peas have convinced us that we can make two bales of cotton grow where one grew before and the same thing is true of corn. We must adjust ourselves to our improved farming and production conditions."

## Era Of 'Live At Home' Farming Reappearing

An era of "live at home" farming is rapidly being restored in Alabama, according to a report released yesterday and received by The Advertiser from the United States Bureau of Census which gives a comparative picture of farming conditions in the State this year with those of five years ago.

The report reflects in a large measure the increase in the growth of food and feed crops and livestock as a result of the Bankhead act, and shows a considerable increase in the number of farms, farm owners and tenants.

Based on the recent Federal farm census, the report is headed "Alabama Quits One-Crop System" and states that a far different situation from that recorded by the census of previous periods is shown in Alabama.

### Crop Land Harvested

"The crop land harvested expanded nearly 1,125,000 acres," the report states, "and the one-crop system appears to have been greatly modified, or in some areas even replaced, by a system of general farming.

"At the 1930 census the acreage of cotton harvested was reported as 3,566,493 compared with 2,130,062 acres for the census just taken.

"Most of the cotton land represented in this five-year decrease, 1,400,000 acres, may be found in corn, which has an increase of over a million acres, and in hay, which expanded about 450,000 acres, as well as in the greatly enlarged area devoted to Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, wheat and oats.

"The average acreage of cotton per farm has been reduced from 13.9 acres in 1929 to 7.8 acres in 1934, while the average acreage of corn and minor crops is very much higher than five years ago.

"The additional production of food and feed crops is such as to enable a large portion of farmers to 'live at home,' rather than buy their supplies from the stores. Further steps in the tendency toward 'home living' are indicated by the increase in swine, a considerable portion of which is butchered for home consumption, and in the increase in the number of cows and other cattle.

"Along with the more nearly self-sufficient type of farming, there has been an increase of at least 124,000 acres of crops and about 16,000 more farms. Of the number of added farmers, about 6,000 are owners and about 10,000 are tenants, of whom share-croppers are 2,840.

"The greater average size of farms indicates an expansion of operations over the State as a whole, although in urban and mining areas the new farms do not follow the trend and are very small."

The Bureau emphasized that the figures are preliminary and are subject to correction.

### State Farm Conditions

A booklet showing a picture of farm conditions by counties in Alabama will be published soon, it was announced, and will be available for a small charge from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

Following is the statistical comparative picture for the State as a whole:

PRELIMINARY FIGURES: STATE OF ALABAMA:

For 1935, inventory items are for Jan. 1; production items, for calendar year 1934.
For 1930, inventory items are for April 1; production items, for calendar year 1929.

| Item | Census 1935 | Census 1930 |
|---|---|---|
| **FARM, FARM ACREAGE AND VALUE** | | |
| Number of farms | 273,455 | 257,395 |
| Farms operated by— | | |
| Full owners | 81,624 | 75,144 |
| Part owners | 15,068 | 15,228 |
| Managers | 516 | 603 |
| All tenants | 176,247 | 166,420 |
| Croppers | 67,974 | 65,134 |
| Value of farms (land and buildings) | $368,219,654 | $502,370,806 |
| Average value per farm | $1,347 | $1,952 |
| Average value per acre | $18.73 | $28.62 |
| All land in farms, acres | 19,660,828 | 17,554,635 |
| Average acreage per farm | 71.9 | 68.2 |
| **FARM LAND ACCORDING TO USE (ACRES)** | | |
| Crop land harvested | 7,238,606 | 7,113,937 |
| Crop failure* | 76,099 | 157,028 |
| Crop land idle or fallow | 1,041,480 | 928,074 |
| Plowable pasture | 1,363,326 | 1,203,622 |
| Woodland pasture | 2,968,218 | 2,290,928 |
| Other patsure | 5,279,013 | 4,195,053 |
| Woodland not pastured | 5,279,013 | 4,195,053 |
| All other land in farms | 983,567 | 1,055,377 |
| Land available for crops | 9,719,511 | 9,402,661 |
| (Harvested, failure, idle, fallow, and plowable pasture.) | | |
| **NUMBER OF LIVESTOCK ON FARMS** | | |
| Horses and colts** | 49,593 | 64,246 |
| Mules and mule colts** | 321,613 | 331,905 |
| Cattle** | 1,125,208 | 681,296 |
| Cows and heifers 2 years old and over | 585,543 | 400,984 |
| Sheep and lambs | 43,128 | 69,156 |
| Hogs and pigs | 888,602 | 831,171 |
| **SELECTED CROPS HARVESTED***** | | |
| Corn for all purposes, acres | 3,648,657 | 2,635,382 |
| Corn for grain, acres | 3,629,604 | 2,591,322 |
| Bushels | 44,343,543 | 35,683,874 |
| Wheat threshed, acres | 9,075 | 1,524 |
| Bushels | 71,254 | 15,070 |
| Oats threshed, acres | 15,064 | 12,298 |
| Bushels | 353,569 | 245,616 |
| Oats cut and fed unthreshed, acres | 90,128 | 86,111 |
| Grain sorghums (for grain), acres | 2,980 | 667 |
| Bushels | 39,986 | 8,978 |
| Cotton, acres | 2,130,062 | 3,566,493 |
| Bales (square) (1) | 934,396 | 1,312,963 |
| Sugarcane for all purposes, acres | 26,653 | 17,856 |
| Tons | 196,559 | (2) |
| Tobacco, acres | 443 | 547 |
| Pounds | 179,143 | 357,093 |
| Irish potatoes, acres | 33,583 | 21,256 |
| Bushels | 3,118,391 | 1,609,525 |
| Sweet potatoes, acres | 110,749 | 68,105 |
| Bushels | 9,332,537 | 6,601,503 |
| All hay, and sorghums for forage, acres | 906,286 | 464,696 |
| Tons | 657,603 | 364,853 |

*The acreage of crop failure does not represent the total acreage of crops which failed, but only the acreage of land in crops which failed and on which no other crop was harvested in 1934.

**Excludes animals under 3 months of age April 1, 1930.

***Excluding fruits, vegetables, and the various annual legumes enumerated, which will be published later.

(1) Running bales of lint cotton, counting round as half bales. (2) Not available.

Grove Hill Ala.
Democrat
Oct 3-1935

## Negro Farmer Makes Big Acreage Yield

Luviger Denson of Whatley, Route 1, one of our colored readers, thinks that the average farmer makes a mistake in trying to work too many acres instead of using intensive cultivation methods on fewer acres. Luviger writes that he made a field test of an acre this year, using 200 pounds of 8-4-4 fertilizer and 150 pounds of nitrate of soda. On this acre he has gathered 1868 pounds of seed cotton, which seems to bear out his contention.

# Farmers Of Montgomery County Chorus Their Approval Of AAA

By MILDRED SMITH

Farmers of the Southern portion of Montgomery County are almost solidly for the AAA. There are a few neutrals and a few dissenters, but these are a small minority.

Once in a while one can be found who declares the AAA has pretty nearly ruined him, and he will stand on this decision. But most of the dissenters, when questioned closely, finally come around to acknowledging that they are just as well off, if not better, than they were before there was an Agricultural Adjustment Act. Invariably the dissenter is the one or two horse farmer, or the landlord who rents out his land to one and two horse farmers.

Whit Athey, Sr., is a farmer on a large scale in the Grady section, his farming interests extending over into Crenshaw County. Mr. Athey also has a large herd of cattle. He says: "When the depression came on and cotton went to five cents, the only cash money I could hope for was from my cattle, and that would not take care of everything. It was all I could do to pay my taxes, and all necessary repairs on farm houses and machinery had to go undone. My tenants could not pay out and there was nothing we could do about it but just let them get deeper and deeper in debt and let my farm houses keep headed to rack and ruin. But since the AAA, things have grown steadily better, and this year, even if we did have to buy a lot of gin receipts, everybody paid up and all of us have some money in our pockets, and I have had my farm repairs made."

Napoleon Trotter, of Ramer, lumberman and farmer, rents to a number of tenants, running between 30 and 40 plows: "I'm 100 per cent for the AAA," he declares with enthusiasm. "This year my tenants have not only paid out of debt, but have paid up back debts running since the advent of the depression. Of course I had to buy a number of gin receipts, but even then, my cotton brought more than it would at five cents for the entire crop, had there been no AAA."

Jesse Farmer, who runs a small farm in the Ebenezer neighborhood, feels that he may have lost by the AAA, but he is not very emphatic about it. He wants the law modified to give more benefits to the one and two horse farmer. So do the farmers on a larger scale, for most of them believe a modification of the law would make it more fair to the small farmer.

N. J. Cowles, merchant and farmer of Ramer, is on neutral ground, admitting that the AAA has both advantages and disadvantages, but he believes that he would have been just as well off without it as with it.

Henry Jackson of the Pisgah neighborhood declares that the AAA has just about ruined him, and he expresses himself in no uncertain terms. He goes back to the days when diversification was preached to farmers. He diversified, and planted only a little cotton for cash money, growing truck and peanuts, etc. Then when the AAA came into existence, he was allowed a minimum amount of cotton to gin tax free, and on his 30-acre farm, it was practically nothing. Now he blames the government for his loss, because he had been a good enough citizen to follow the plea for diversification.

The same thing reacted on E. E. Huffman of Dublin, who rented a place and planted cotton and because of its low production in past years when he got through buying gin receipts and paying for picking, etc, he had cleared only 5¢ cents.

John Houlton, of Dublin, a two-horse farmer, is staunchly for the AAA, though he feels that it has some disadvantages, too. He states that he does not have any cash money left from the sale of his crop, but for once he had paid up everything and everybody "but the doctor," and it is generally known that it is the custom to pay the doctor last. Probably by now he had paid him too, since this statement was made by Mr. Houlton several weeks ago. Mr. Houlton's farmer neighbors, who also have small farms, are against the AAA, and they believe the one and two horse farmer ought to be allowed to gin all the cotton they make tax free.

Mrs. T. C. Thompson, of the Smilietown community, runs a "country store" in Montgomery where she sells products made on her truck farm. "Though I do not grow cotton," says Mrs. Thompson, "I know the AAA has benefited me indirectly and I am for it 100 per cent. I buy chickens and turkeys from the people in this section and fatten them to sell as dressed fowls in my store. You can't tell me that every one of them doesn't seem in a happier frame of mind than they have been since the advent of the depression and they certainly all have some cash money in their pockets."

C. O. Rawls, of Macedonia runs about 30 or 40 plows, and O. C. McNeill of the same neighborhood, runs two or three yet both are equally in favor of the AAA. Speaking of the dissenters, Mr. Rawls says: "These one and two horse farmers who are cussing the AAA have never thought that part of their cotton at 10 cents and part at five cents is better than all of it at five cents."

But the dissenters state strongly that when cotton was five cents groceries were half the price or less than they are now so there lies the rub, and the small farmers want something done about it.

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**SENATOR BANKHEAD AND THE FARM**

Editor The Advertiser:

The Bankhead bill is a union of the farm and that is why we have the Bankhead bi... It seems that the farmers just will not cooperate otherwise. Now we must see that our union is not as the other unions, just for the benefit of a few, while the others go hungry. If the honest farmers do not demand an honest deal, and see that we get it, the Bankhead bill will go into the scrap heap, like the prohibition bill did. We all know that there are some men that received more allotments than they were entitled to receive. Now if we do not see that this chiseling is corrected it will hurt the Bankhead bill.

A merchant told me that some farmers as soon as they signed up last Spring began to talk and say their crops were going to be short and kept talking about their short crops, while other farmers said they were making good crops. When Fall came he saw why some of the farmers claimed their crops were going to be short. The reason was they sold so many permits.

Mr. Editor, here is something that you and, in fact, all the people in the South are interested in: It is this, that most of the landlords have raised their rents and in good many cases have raised them enough to take all of the rent the tenants received from the Government. The only way that I see to remedy this is for the Government to refuse to rent or give allotments to any landlord that raises his rent.

If this is not done you will not see any increase in business next Fall.

What is the use of the President trying to held the small two-bale fellow? I will give you an illustration that I know of. A tenant whom I know, is allowed to gin 900 pounds of cotton. Government pays tenant $18 rent and the landlord has raised his rent $15.

The Bankhead bill is the farmers' salvation for the present; are we going to protect it or not. I'm for a fair deal for all.

Tyler, Ala. JOHN M. KING.

## Decline Now Indicated In Strawberry Acreage

Preliminary reports indicate that the strawberry acreage in Alabama this year will be approximately 2,500, compared with 3,150 acres last year. The strawberry acreage in Alabama for some reason has been very seriously reduced in recent years. The peak acreage was 6,500 in 1930. In 1931 the acreage had dropped to 3,850, which was increased again to 4,460 in 1933.

The strawberry acreage in the five early States this year has been reduced in about the same proportion as in Alabama. In the second early and intermediate States the reduction in creage has been proportionately much more severe, with a slight increase in the late States. Altogether the strawberry acreage in the United States this year is about 28,000 less than in 1934.

## Negro Farmers Send Telegram To Fdr To Express Gratitude

A telegram, sent to president Roosevelt early Wednesday afternoon, following a meeting held at Selma University when farmers present heard F. A. Miller of Washington assistant director of Cotton AAA, H. A. Hunt of the Farm Credit Administration, and others, expressed the spirit of gratitude of negro farmers of this county for the benefits received under the President's policy and praised the fairness of its administration.

The telegram, signed by the Dallas County Colored Farm Bureau, read as follows;

"Three years ago, thru an act of Providence and the wishes of the voters, you were delegated to the task of lifting the citizenry of this great nation from the lowest point of poverty and despair ever experienced. You have given to the common folk the consideration necessary for their improvement. Cotton grown in the Southern states which is largely cultivated and harvested by Negroes, has given this nation billions of dollars. Thru this Administration we were given a cotton division of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration under the wise and successful guidance of Hon., Cully A. Cobb, seasoned in experience and familiar with all phases of the cotton industry.

White and colored cotton farmers are now marching toward better days. We pray that the present policies of the Administration be continued in their entirety and the same spirit of fairness be continued."

Times

September 25, 1935

# MILLER SPEAKS BEFORE NEGRO FARMERS HERE

### County Leaders Also In Audience As Leader Of AAA Talks

Speaking on special phases of the government's agricultural program at the fifty-ninth opening session of Selma University Wednesday morning, F. A. Miller of Washington, D. C., assistant director of cotton, AAA; Dr. H. A. Hunt of Washington, assistant to the governor, Farm Credit Administration, and other representative figures in the AAA administration made impressive appeals to negro farmers present to use credit sparingly and only when needed.

Mr. Miller, speaking forcefully of the importance of giving back to the producer a just share of the wealth he has made, said that contented home owners would go a long way toward solving today's problems, and he emphasized the spirit of cooperation between white and colored peoples as being a cornerstone of continued good relations.

Industry, he said, plowed up millions of men and was not criticized.

Foreign production of cotton has been greatly exaggerated, with Brazil producing less than half the expected crop, he said.

Self-help and a greater regard for the old virtue of self-denial were lauded by Dr. Hunt as means of bringing about economic improvement in the condition of the negro farmer. He urged his hearers not to borrow except for things actually needed. Speaking of the manner in which the Farm Credit organization functions, Dr. Hall said that it is a business with no element of Santa Claus and the Christmas tree included. The government must be repaid and the tax payer will be the person to repay, Dr. Hunt said. The trouble with too many persons is that they are looking for something for nothing, and do not realize that repayment is to be exacted.

He spoke also of the Production Credit Association through which low interest rates are extended to farmers for the period they will need the money and referred to the fact that numbers of colored farmers who have secured these loans, have made an excellent showing in repayment. Ample security must be put up for these loans, he explained. In closing he urged his hearers to be thrifty and buy land, as all wealth comes from the land, he said. Support of Selma University, which he praised as one of the best negro educational institutions in the country, also was urged as he praised William H. Dinkins, its president. Dr. Hunt was presented by James P. Davis of Chicago, of the field service of the AAA, and a Georgia negro.

A number of farmers, both white and colored, were on hand to hear the special addresses, among this number being T. J. Luckie, president of the Dallas County Farm Bureau; Capt. Glenn Deffke, foreman of resettlement farmers; John Blake, A. C. Allen, Tom Lumpkin, farm agents; A. Q. Edmondson, county agent, Wilcox; Edgar Pritchett, Camden; Lem A. Edmondson, county agent, Montgomery; I. J. Fluker, state allotment board, Auburn; Hunter Kendall, J. O. Hain, farm bureau directors; Hunt Frasier, secretary of the Chamber of Commerce.

T. M. Campbell, in charge of negro farm extension work in southern states, and a group from Tuskegee; N. Kallock, state agent for negro extension work in Alabama, Tuskegee, P. J. Brown, county agent, Hale county; M. S. Stratman, principal Prairie Institute, Prairie, Ala., and P. Austin, principal of the Linden Academy. A number of negro farmers and leaders from the county also attended.

Enrollment at Selma University was good for the opening day with more students expected in Oct. 1. Collection for the school and pledges of support, resulted in a nice sum being taken in at the opening session.

Arkansas.

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# SUPERVISORS NAMED IN TENANT SURVEY

Will Check Number Forced Onto Relief Rolls

From Little Rock Bureau of
The Commercial Appeal

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., April 29.—Supervisors were named in Poinsett, White, Clark, Jefferson, St. Francis and Phillips counties today for a survey of landlord-tenant relationships to determine to what extent relief and rehabilitation clients have been forced on relief rolls as a result of violations of cotton acreage reduction contracts.

The following appointments were announced by C. A. Hughes, state supervisor of the survey:

S. J. Beard, Poinsett; C. M. Reevees, White; D. F. Webb, Clark; M. C. Hollis, Phillips; T. D. Bullock, St. Francis, and C. L. Haskew, Jefferson.

"The tenant survey is approximately 32 per cent complete, while the landlord survey is only about 25 per cent complete," Mr. Hughes said.

He pointed out that the survey would also determine the extent to which families on relief rolls have been evicted from farms in violation of cotton contracts.

The survey is being conducted jointly by the AAA and the FERA.

**PINE BLUFF, ARK.**
**GRAPHIC**

APR 27 1935

## THE SHARE-CROPPER

So much palpable nonsense has been written about the share-cropper that it is refreshing to find a writer not so warped by prejudice that he can present obvious facts to his readers. Norman Thomas and smaller fry among the "liberals" so long have played upon the "human exploitation" string that the note has become sour to people inclined to believe there are two sides to the discussion over the sharecropper.

Raymond Moley's journal, Today, sent Edward Angly, a writer, to eastern Arkansas to talk to both cropper and plantation owner and his report on his experiences appears in the April 27 issue of the magazine. His article may be a revelation to folks in the North and East who have taken Mr. Thomas' hysterics too seriously, but to men and women who know conditions in the cotton region, it is a fair report upon a system born of the plight of the white man and the Negro at the close of the Civil War.

No summary of Mr. Angly's article would do it justice. Let it suffice to mention only a few of his observations. He interviewed "croppers" and plantation owners, found that those of the former who had "hustled" made money during periods of good prices for cotton and lost when prices were low. Obviously—Mr. Thomas to the contrary notwithstanding—the owners suffered a similar fate.

He talked to a Negro share-cropper and his wife who had been in Arkansas "since 1921, the year the boll weevil drove them out of Louisiana." They had a flock of chickens, hogs, money, and this year they are "not asking as much furnish at the comissary."

He found other share-croppers who planted gardens for themselves only because the owner threatened to "fine" them when the annual settlement came. He tells of a planter who screened the houses of some of his "croppers" and they threw dish water through the wire. Rather than chop free wood they tore planks from the house for fuel.

That is one type of share-cropper. He found another in a mountainer whose crops on a little farm in northwest Arkansas had been destroyed by the 1930 drouth. He sold out for $25 and, too proud to accept charity from the Red Cross, moved to the delta where he is "getting along fine."

Mr. Angly's story is an old one in that it shows that with its many admitted faults the share-cropper system brings out whether a man is energetic or indolent, whether he is fair or blinded by greed. It deserves wide distribution among reformers. — Arkansas Democrat.

# Situation of Share Croppers In Ark. Discussed In Report Issued By Federal Council of Churches

Interest of the public in the problems of share-croppers and share-tenants has been increased by the recent publication of a report by the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America on "Cotton Growing Communities in Arkansas." The report was compiled by Dr. Benson Y. Landis and Dr. George E. Haynes of the staff of the Council who conducted the survey under the auspices of a state conference of Negro and white citizens and with the aid of more than twelve staff member of the educational and agricultural agencies of Arkansas.

Ten cotton-growing communities and ten cotton plantations in six typical counties in that state were included in the survey. A total of 7,187 Negro and 3,266 white rural residents living on 1,881 unsupervised farms and ten plantations were covered.

While little more than one third of the white farmers were classed as share-tenants or share-croppers, almost three fourths of the Negro farmers came into the same category, it was reported. Of 762 small farms operated by whites, 53.4 percent were operated by owners, 11.3 percent by managers and 35.3 per cent by share-tenants or share-croppers.

Only 26 percent of the 1,119 small farms operated by Negroes were found to be operated by owners, 1 percent by managers and 73 percent by share-tenants and share-croppers.

"Government sources were the most important and almost sole sources" of short-time credit for crop production to enable farmers to purchase seed, feed and fertilizer in light of the ten communities of small farms, it was found. The net cash income of half of the 46 Negro farmers included in the study was less than $150 in any of the years, 1929, 1931 or 1933, it was reported, and even with additional estimated net income in produce of non-cash crops the total net income in both cash and kind of these farmers was less than $300 in any of those years.

The net income was arrived at by taking the gross cash income and subtracting the expenses of farm operation based upon estimates of the farmers assisted by survey workers.

### Farmers Have Little Schooling

Stressed in the report was the fact that the Negro farmers for the most part had had very meager school training. Of seventy heads of families, about 43 per cent had attended school for from one to four years of the usual short term rural schol; and a similar percentage had attended five to eight years.

Few if any of them had attended a nine-months term in any year, as a result of which most of them could barely read and write.

On the ten widely scattered plantations covered by the survey, the Negro population was found to be 1,437 and the white 60, about 96 percent of the total population being Negro. More than half of the white residents were tenants, about a fourth were overseers, managers and store employees.

More than half of the Negro residents, 51.8 percent, were share croppers, an additional one fifth were other types of tenants and more than a fourth were farm laborers.

### No Written Contracts

Agreements between landlord and tenants on these plantations were largely verbal, the report said. In only one case was a written contract reported and this contract had "two striking features," continues the report.

"It is the share-tenant or share-cropper who 'strictly agrees' to remain on the land during the year. The landlord does not 'strictly agree' to any of the terms," the report said.

Prices tenants were charged for goods, usually on credit, in the plantation stores were greater in many instances, said the report. Prices on five principal items of food in the plantation stores were found to be 19 percent higher than in nearby stores, it was found. The net cash incomes of 32 tenants, taken as a sample, were found to have been less than $250 each in 1929, and all but one were less than that with four exceptions, in 1929.

figure in 1931 and 1933. Wages on eight plantations for day laborers, only a few of whom were white, were found to be from 50 to 75 cents per day, and the price of picking cotton ranged from 25 to 75 cents per hundred pounds.

The report ended with some recommendations from the directors of the survey which included land purchase and settlement plans by government for private parties along such lines that the tenants could begin without capital down payments. The directors also said:

### Recommendations Made

"Three important factors seem clear: 1. a live-at-home program, leading the farmer to raise his food and feed; 2. managerial supervision in connection with any such settlement projects among Negro cotton farmers; 3. it would appear that success in attaining land ownership is dependent upon a low price for land; land of good quality and the purchase of manageable acreage with a maximum cost not over $1,000. Personal reliability in paying debts, is also important. Persons with family dependents have shown greater persistence."

Efforts to encourage the landlord-tenant contracts for more than one year were also urged by the directors of the survey and they advocated a thorough study of the credit situation and interracial cooperation on matters of mutual interest.

"The chief need is for more constructive efforts," they conclude by declaring. "The white leaders of the state have greater responsibility to take the initiative in this matter as they control much of the civic and economic forces."

Charlotte, [illegible]

# *Chargés Negro Organizers Receiving Rich Harvest*

Little Rock, Ark., Oct. 31.—(AP)—Societies and associations with high-sounding names and dues payable in cash or goods are netting negro organizations a rich harvest among the sharecroppers of eastern Arkansas, E. B. Whitaker, assistant regional director of the resettlement administration, charged today.

Whitaker said the organizers are playing on the desire among the credulent farmers to obtain aid from the resettlement administration, hundreds, he said, have enrolled in the groups with the assurance that, by united action, they can obtain homes and farms from the government.

The result, Whitaker said, is that all persons discovered to be members of such organizations are being marked off the resettlement rolls of applicants on the assumption that they are not capable of assuming the responsibility of farm ownership.

"A few of these organizations were formed by negro leaders for the honest purpose of aiding the members toward resettlement. In these cases no fees have been collected, or fees have been limited to amounts needed for minimum expenses of operation," he said.

"The rest are outright rackets and their members should be warned that they are wasting their money and their time."

Whitaker charged that some of the organizers were gaining confidence of prospective members by posing as preachers. He said one organizer charged a $13 membership fee and, because most of the potential members had no cash, he sent a truck from home to home to collect the fee in goods.

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Florida

Miami, Fla. Herald
March 28, 1935

**TO HELP THE CROPPER**

NATURALLY, South Florida is only indirectly interested in the question of farm tenancy that is now agitating practically all of the Southern states.

Here are very few, if any farms or groves operated by others than the owners, but in the northern part of Florida there are many large farm areas that are operated on what is known as the crop share plan. That is, the owner of the land leases to tenants, provides them with subsistence and shares in the returns from the crops.

This plan prevails, largely, over all the agricultural lands of the South under cultivation.

The system is not a healthy one either for the tenant the owner or the public and the South is suffering from the deplorable fact that farm tenancy instead of farm ownership is rapidly increasing. This undoubtedly means that in the South there is being created a large peasant class that is becoming poorer and more destitute with each passing year.

It is not a negro condition, as many people believe, by any means. Sixty-one per cent of the South's tenant farmers are white men.

Conditions of farm tenancy have grown worse, steadily, during recent years, owing to crop failures, boll weevil, low cotton prices and decreased demand for the staple. The result is that in the Southern farm area one family in every four is now on the relief rolls.

The situation is appalling and bodes dire disaster unless something is done speedily to change the tenant farm system.

Senator Bankhead of Alabama has introduced a bill in congress which, it is believed, will make it possible to transfer many thousands of tenant farmers into a class of farm owners.

Briefly, the bill provides that there shall be a corporation to be known as the "Farm Tenant Homes Corporation," to be financed, primarily by the issue of $100,000,000 of stock to be subscribed for on behalf of the United States Government. The corporation will be authorized to issue bonds to be sold to the public, guaranteed both as to principal and interest by the United States.

The corporation will have authority to make loans to farm tenants and share-croppers; to purchase farm lands and personal property needed in equipping and operating farms.

The farms so acquired are to be sold to a farm tenant or share-cropper, and to no others the corporation to take back a mortgage which will provide for small annual payments over a term of years and at low interest

The bill, as written, will amply safeguard the government's investment and will provide a way out for thousands of tenant farmers and their families whose prospects, now, are enveloped in complete darkness.

Agriculture-1935
Condition of
Pacific Rural Press
San Francisco, Cal.
NOV 9 1935

General.

## *Dixie's Cotton Slavery Breaks Down.*

PERHAPS the most starkly terrible indictment ever written about the personal and economic slavery in which cotton holds five and a half million white tenants and three million black tenants in the Old South is the new book by three college leaders of Dixie—"The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy."

This book had to be written and printed in the South by friends of the South. Otherwise it could never have claimed sponsorship of a distinguished list of Southern leaders, including the editors of the Progressive Farmer, the Southern Ruralist, and the Atlanta Constitution.

Some of us who have seen the great misery of cotton in the pre-war days can appreciate the greater hopelessness of these latter and more oppressive days, but only Southerners would want to publicly describe their tenants as "the most impoverished and backward of all the large groups of producers in America" and describe King Cotton's fief as "a miserable panorama of unpainted shacks, rain-gullied fields, straggling fences, rattle-trap Fords, dirt, poverty, disease, drudgery, and monotony."

Only Southerners would peek into 2,000 tenant homes and frankly tell the story of zero per cent homes having running water, kitchen sinks, and lights other than oil lamps; that only half the white families have a doctor at childbirth, while in negro families the percentage is about 13; that only about half the white families take magazines or newspapers, while only 7.4 per cent of negro tenants have such reading matter and only 17.9 per cent of negro croppers; that the average number of books in white homes was 2.69 while in negro homes it was 1.5; that the number of times members of the family have participated in recreation during the year was 1.4 times for the white families and .92 times for negro families; that the highest average annual cash income was $174.45 for a white family and $118.51 for a negro family; and that the average charge which landlords pile on tenants in interest, profit on supplies, and fees for supervision average about 50 per cent—this in violation of all laws of usury.

It takes acknowledged patriots of the South to write with good grace this incident:

"A tenant offering five bales of cotton was told, after some owl-eyed figuring, that his cotton exactly balanced his debt. Delighted at the prospect of a profit this year, the tenant reported that he had one more bale which he hadn't brought in yet. 'Shucks,' shouted the boss, 'why didn't you tell me before? Now I'll have to figure the account all over again to make it come out even.'"

Most white tenants, and practically all negro tenants, would not dare challenge such accounting.

That's the degree of human slavery in Dixie today.

Their doled out diet is 40 per cent fat salt pork, with corn meal and molasses making up most of the remainder of the diet.

The agricultural extension service of the United States was born of the hope that county agents and home demonstration agents could teach them to grow vegetables and fruit and have livestock and poultry, both as a cure of pellagra and of economic sickness. But it has mostly failed because of the attitude of the landlords who do not want freedom for their cropping slaves. Their own tenuous hold on economic life depends upon keeping the white and black tenants in thraldom.

* * *

IT is fortunate that the effect of the AAA in Dixie can be described by these Southern patriots whose political bias should be at minimum.

Their finding is that the benefit payments have not reached the tenants, but gone into the pockets of the landlords. In many cases the tenant never heard of the Bankhead Bill. If he knew about the benefit payments they were mostly "credited to his account." When the AAA sought to divide the payments between landlords and tenants, the landlords forcibly took the tenant's share in many cases. There is no chance in the Southern courts of remedying this.

The landlords who borrowed federal money at 4½ to 6½ per cent, continued to pile up as much as 50 per cent interest on their tenants.

"So far the various Debt Reconciliation Commissions have made no attempts to have landlords scale down debt owed them from previous seasons by croppers and share tenants."

Meanwhile federal expenditures for relief have increased since benefit payments were distributed in Dixie.

* * *

AN impossible situation has come to the end of its rope.

These authors see no hope for the continuance of the rule of King Cotton.

The world can and is growing cotton on more fertile lands at prices with which Dixie's cotton tenant system cannot compete. Rayon crowds cotton. In 1932 this nation consumed 39,400,000 pounds of Rayon.

At the Delta Experiment Station in Mississippi a mechanical cotton picker has done as much work in 7½ hours as a hand picker could do in 3½ months. The perfection of a mechanical picker will force the cotton patches of Dixie to abdicate to the cotton plains of Texas and Oklahoma. There tractor-pulled 4-row cultivators operate now at about a third the cost of the one-nigger-one-mule method of Dixie, and California can beat Oklahoma and Texas.

* * *

THE landlords have wrung the tenants dry, and corporations and banks have taken over vast quantities of the land.

The South, with its necessary crop restriction program, has now permanently added about 2½ million former cotton tenants to the unemployed class.

In one survey 40 per cent of the landlords opposed having the government give them relief direct because it would spoil them for future service as tenants.

This book does not attempt to fix blame upon the landlords for their policies, nor has it any idea that they could do much else under the present system. It seeks to report how an impossible situation has been sustained this long and to point out that the nation is now up against the necessity of doing something about it. They see no hope of cotton coming back.

* * *

WHAT to do?

The authors point out four alternatives:

1. Let them starve.
2. Permanent support on relief rolls.
3. The finding of new work in the cities.
4. Reorganization of farming in the old cotton states.

Their recommendation is for the federal government to buy up large tracts of this land and put these slaves on it under liberal financing and friendly government supervision.

Teach them to grow vegetables and fruit and to have livestock.

Give them health, education, and freedom.

This paternalism is better than having them on a permanent relief roll they believe.

Denmark abolished tenancy, they say, and many foreign countries have set out to minimize it. They think it is our turn to act in the U.S.A.

THIS short discussion has missed much of the graphic-ness, the color, the economic background of this book of clear logic and terrible interest. If you want the complete story send $1 to the University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N. C. and ask for "The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy."

# MISDIRECTED CREDIT Commercial HELD FARM ILL CAUSE

## Led To Ruin Of Land, Rome, Ga., Banker Says Appeal

## SPEAKS AT FARM FORUM

## "Nothing Will More Surely Bring Prosperity Than Live-At-Home Program," John M. Graham Tells Audience 12-13-35 Memphis Press

"Nothing will more surely bring happiness and prosperity to the families on the farms than a live-at-home program.

"Misdirected credit in the past has had an important part in the downfall of the southern farmer and the ruin of his land.

"Properly directed credit can play a full part in restoring the farmer and his land."

John M. Graham, president of the National City Bank of Rome, Ga., stressed those facts in his address on "Farm Financing" yesterday morning at The Commercial Appeal's Mid-South Farm Forum at Ellis Auditorium.

**Followed Bad Program**

Speaking from his experience in handling farm financing for 23 years, Mr. Graham accused bankers in the past with following a program that made the farmers ruin their lands and with charging "very high rates of interest."

Mr. Graham said that a live-at-home program is to him "the surest way of solving our troubles." He said that in later years "this period through which we have gone, when all looked so dark, may be regarded as a period of salvation—sound in spite of ourselves—in which we have been forced to do the kind of farming we should have always been doing."

His address follows:

"The Commercial Appeal and the Memphis Chamber of Commerce are doing worthwhile work in sponsoring the Plant-to-Prosper campaign and conducting this Mid-South Farm Forum. Nothing will more surely bring happiness and prosperity to the families on the farms than a live-at-home program put into effect, and in turn this prosperity of the farm will be reflected in business of the towns and cities. I have felt very much honored in having been invited to have a part on your program.

"My knowledge of what goes to make sound farming in this southern country of ours comes as a result of many years' experience as a banker engaged in extending credit to farmers. You must pardon more or less of the personal in my talk, but this becomes necessary for me to prove my case. What I am wanting to point out to you is the following: Misdirected credit in the past has largely had to do with bringing about the downfall of the southern farmer and the ruin of his land.

**A Full Part**

"And then I want to say that properly directed credit can play a full part in restoring the farmer and his land.

"Let us view the farmer when the 'war between the states' had ended. He and his southland were bankrupt. Credit was essential and difficult to obtain. Sources of credit were the supply houses principally, and their credit conditions were that cotton be planted to secure the indebtedness contracted. The supply merchant was just as interested in selling his farmer customers the feed crops needed for the live stock in the growing of his cotton, as he was interested in selling him coffee and sugar, shoes and calico for the family.

"Even when there were virgin lands that could be brought into use as the older lands wore out, under our crop cotton system demanded by the supply merchant, there were not so many farmers to get ahead of the game and find themselves where they could call themselves free men and farm as their better judgment told them it was proper to do. It required a break of good luck or a rare individual to get ahead of the game when credit extended was at such high cost and the growing of cotton largely to the exclusion of other crops demanded. No legitimate business could stand the toll of those extending credit for long years following the Civil War.

"Then there came the time where no longer were there virgin lands. Until this came to pass the supply people grew rich and the farmers eked out an existence from farm operations together with income received from disposing of the timber on the lands. They managed to pay but not so many got ahead of the game. Then it came about that commercial fertilizers were essential to the producing of crops on the lands under our crop system. The lands had become exhausted. The banker came into the picture about that time—say some 50 years ago—and took a hand in extending credit directly to the farmer.

"Just so long as communities were bottled up—no automobiles or good roads—the banks came along fairly well, for they named very high rates of interest, and in fact so high that legitimate business could make no headway. Bankers were no different from supply merchants in their demands that cotton be grown to the exclusion of other crops. Cotton acres must be security for loans granted.

**Went "Busted"**

"Then there came the fall of 1920, and the period following when most supply houses, many country banks and thousands upon thousands of farmers went 'busted' all together. The farmer who could continue to hold himself together after that fall of 1920, when cotton had dropped from 45 cents per pound in August to 10 or 12 cents in November, was the farmer who had corn in the crib, hay in the loft and meat in the smokehouse. I know the truth of what I am saying, for I was largely engaged in farmer financing at that time and made it my business to learn what was going on with the farmer.

"We organized our bank in 1913 and I have been president since its organization. Largely had our bank been built on the farmers' business. They had been paying pretty high interest to the other five banks in Rome and we took advantage of that circumstance and financed them with no interest beyond the legal rate. We believed in diversified farming and the bank had many interesting experiences with the farmers in encouraging them in farming of that kind. Some of the movements we fostered were unwise, and it did not take us long to learn that it was foolish for all concerned to inaugurate undertakings on too large a scale.

**Best Cash Crop**

"We learned that cotton is the best cash crop for the majority of farmers. Other cash crops must come along slowly, for the farmer must feel his way, both as to growing the other crops or raising the live stock and in finding his markets. And so after we had preached and encouraged the supplying of the home market (the market on the farm), we went very slow in urging the farmer to get away from cotton as his cash crop. We continue to be of that mind.

"When the spring of 1921 came and we discovered that the only farmers who could continue were those who did not have their feed and food crops to buy, we made some investigations in our bank. We found we had about $200,000 of farmers' money in the savings department of the bank, made up by some 190 accounts. Then a careful study was made to learn just what kind of farming these 190 farmers engaged in. Without exception we could find not a one of them who had ever hauled a bale of hay or a sack of corn from town to their farm.

"Then we reached a decision and for the past 15 years have lived up to that decision. We decided a farmer was not a safe credit risk who did not live at home, who thought he could grow cotton and buy the crops necessary to grow it. And so beginning with the spring of 1921 (before planting time) we carried a page advertisement in our local paper, and it was headed "A Plain Statement."

**Same Demand**

"We have continued to reproduce the same advertisement each year and broadcast the information in other ways, until now it is no longer necessary, and also since the government is making the same demand of the farmers in their granting of loans to them. Part of 'A Plain Statement' reads as follows: 'We expect to extend credit to those farmers who are careful to grow ample food and feed crops to meet the needs of their farms.'

"The record made by the government in collecting the seed loans made to the cotton farmer has been a remarkable record. These loans would not have been repaid as has been the case, had it not been that the requirement was made that the farmer must 'live at home'—produce on the farm those crops needed for family and the live stock. The big majority of the farmers receiving the seed loans have been poor credit risks. I am sure this is true in the section I am from, and yet the records show that for the years 1932-33-34 and 35 in the nine counties surrounding and including my home county of Floyd, 94 per cent of these loans have been repaid. The percentage will be higher than this for collections for this year had only been reported to Oct. 31.

"Directed credit by the government has brought about that splendid showing in the matter of collections. My information is that repayment of seed loans in the cotton states is far in excess of repayments in other sections of the country. This it seems to me is proof sufficient that with cotton for a cash crop and a "live-at-home" program, as demanded in granting the seed loans—the south can come into its own in an agricultural way.

**Sound Farming**

"Let me say this—there is 'brains a-plenty' back of all the government activities in restricting cotton production. Benefits far beyond the higher price for cotton are being accomplished. Sound farming is brought to pass, and 'believe it or not' the south is largely feeding herself. I am sure there are many government activities at the present time that many of us do not approve of, and yet I want to say, with all the emphasis of which I am capable that the greatest revolution for good that has ever come to the south in an agricultural way has come as a result of some of these activities. I know personally most of the gentlemen who have worked out the cotton program and I am confident they have had in mind always that they were doing a much bigger thing for the south than that of merely advancing the cotton price.

"A few words in closing, and these as to the future. The time will come when there will not be a directed farm program from Washington, and then it will be for us to decide whether we are to carry on without that direction. At no time within my knowledge has the south been farming in a way as sound as today. Those gentlemen who seem so greatly disturbed over the south losing the world market for cotton are those handling the cotton after the farmer has produced it, or those from other sections of the country who have been supplying us all these years with the food and feed crops necessary to produce the export cotton.

"From my viewpoint I do not hesitate to say that I think it a poor day's business for the south to ever grow cotton for export unless it comes about that this export cotton has been grown after the food and feed crops necessary for its production have been grown. And so when the government has ceased its activities it remains to be seen whether we are to keep on in the sound way we have been directed, or whether we will drop back into the old way of growing cotton and buying feed crops to do so.

"Should this come to pass then all credit agencies in the south must come together and have a common understanding that credit cannot be safely extended except with the farmer living at home. For years this has seemed to me the surest way of solving our troubles.

"In later years this period through which we have gone, when all looked so dark, may be regarded as a period of salvation—sound in spite of ourselves—in which we have been forced to do the kind of farming we should have always been doing."

Agriculture - 1935

General.

Condition of.

## CHEATERS NEVER WIN

The cotton planters have become confirmed beggars for preferred treatment at the hands of the government. When the new deal was set up, they were among the first to be given fat checks for what they did not raise. The government planned that they should share its money with their tenants. They kept it all, and in addition had an increased price for the crop raised. Still they are not pleased. They got their first taste of unearned advantage when Woodrow Wilson maneuvered a good price for cotton during the World war. Now they go to the President complaining that they have lost their foreign market.

4-26-35

The government by artificial means could raise the price of cotton on the home market. But foreign buyers outside our tariff walls were free to buy wherever they found the best price. Even American manufacturers, faced with the competition of English, Japanese and German cotton goods manufacturers, have set up establishments outside the United States. The southern farmer sees his market disappearing. His momentary advantage has soured. He will be fifty years getting back the trade he had, if he ever regains it. The cotton planters are not the first to find it is "impossible to eat your cake and have it too."

It is retribution. The South has never learned that the fair deal is the only deal in business. It once depended upon an inhuman system to enable it to produce cotton at a competitive price. When slavery was no longer lawful, unlike the wheat farmer and the stock raiser who kept apace with the times, the planter still clung to outworn methods. Long before this depression and world upset, he saw his fields left untenanted. But the warning went unheeded. Even when given a government bounty, he was too dumb to see that inevitably he would have to pay for the assistance given by living up to the spirit of the new deal.

It must be galling to the South to know that the cotton it says it can produce at a price suited to a world market only if its black workers are kept in serfdom, is being grown in Brazil by other black labor that shares equally with whites the government of the country. It is now nearly three quarters of a century since the Civil war, long enough for the slowest mind to realize that essentially that conflict was not over the enslavement of black men, but was between paid and unpaid labor. The color of the workers was only incidental. Unpaid labor will always lose, because the cheerfulness of the worker, his satisfaction with his job, his goodwill for his employer make him a producer of more goods, and therefore a cheaper worker.

There is none so blind as he who will not open his eyes and see. At this very time when a senator from South Carolina is telling the world that he will oppose the anti-lynching bil with all his might, a measure of good intent for Negro citizens, his state along with other cotton producers is complaining to the President! Pampered favorites, they look now for another windfall!

The first thing for the cotton planter to do is to take stock of his resources, of which the Negro laborer is his best. Given intelligent direction, and a reasonable amount of opportunity, black labor can make Dixie again able to compete in a world market. Denied these, that section repeats its mistakes of yesterday, when its slave system was weighed in the balance and found inferior to the free labor of the North.

## A Newer South Foreseen

General Robert E. Wood, chairman of the President's Advisory Relief Council, in his remarks at Dallas Saturday last took a most sensible view of the farming situation in the South.

4-19-35

The South's devotion to the raising of cotton for export purposes has been at a terrific cost, in his opinion. It has brought to the South the tenant problem, along with a very low standard of living for cotton farmers. The results are not worth the price. He thought that, as the foreign demand for cotton diminishes, the farmers will learn to live on their own, to grow feed crops and gardens, and a small amount of cotton as a cash crop.

General Wood voiced the opinion that is steadily growing in the old South and in the new Southwest. The raising of cotton in many of its aspects has been a curse, through slavery and the present tenant-cropper system. Most of these have standards of living in general lower than those of the average peasant in Europe. A generation from now the slow passing of cotton for export trade will be considered a blessing. In place of the present system will presumably be developed a mass of home industries and a farming population, largely owning their farms, living comfortable on their own, supplemented by a partial participation in domestic industries.

The Southwest should cease to shed tears over the diminution of the demand for its cotton and preferably should seek new outlets for capital in industries largely utilizing the State's natural resources. Texas has a greater prosperity ahead of it than it ever has had in the past, but it needs far-sighted leaders who will point the way to larger fields of economic endeavor.—Dallas News.

## SHARECROPPERS PLEA TAKEN TO PRESIDENT

### Thomas Blames Long for Arkansans' Plight

5-3-35

WASHINGTON, May 2.—(AP)—Labor conditions in the Arkansas cotton country were condemned to President Roosevelt today by Norman Thomas, former Socialist candidate for president, and blamed by him principally upon Senator Long of Louisiana.

Thomas asked the president to make an investigation into what he termed a "reign of terror in Arkansas."

He contended southern planters were responsible for the "reign of terror" in attempting to break up the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

"Huey Long's hypocrisy is better shown by this than anything else," he said, "because he could do something about it.

"There is more misery there than anywhere else in the United States and he hasn't raised a finger."

Thomas also asked revision of the cotton contracts between the AAA and the planters and proposed amendment of the Wagner labor bill to give protection to agricultural workers the same as to industrial workers.

# Southern Policy Group Formed

## New Committee Proposes To Give Opinions On Problems Of Importance

5-6-35

WASHINGTON, May 5.—(AP)—Organization of a Southern policy committee, comprised of leading citizens from nine Southern States, was announced today by Francis Pickins Miller, of Fairfax, Va., secretary of the new organization.

H. C. Nixon, of Tulane University, is chairman of the committee, Miller said, with Brooks Hays, Democratic national committeeman from Arkansas, vice-president.

The secretary made public a memorandum outlining purposes of the group. It stated:

"Hitherto the views of the South have often been represented by exclusive economic interests on the one hand, or political sensationalists on the other. No one questions the right of such spokesmen to be heard. The public policy committee, however, seek to present the considered views of still different, and, it is hoped, more general element of opinion in the Southern States in regard to national problems."

The Southern policy general committee, it was explained in a formal announcement, will be comprised of public policy committees in leading cities of the South.

Miller formerly was field secretary of the Foreign Policy Association. In addition to the chairman and vice-chairman of the new group he listed members of the permanent general committee as Richard F. Cleveland, Baltimore; Virginius Dabney, Richmond Times Dispatch; Jonathan Daniels, of The Raleigh News and Observer; R. Beverley Herbert, Columbia, S. C., lawyer; Dale Miller, associate editor of The Texas Weekly; J. Van Dyke Norman, Louisville banker; James Waller of Nashville, Tenn., and Philip Weltner, chancellor of the Georgia University system.

While the committee at its recent organization meeting in Atlanta made no effort to formulate a program for the South, Miller said, it saw an exchange of views on a variety of national issues, ranging from the pending Bankhead tenant bill to the cotton and tobacco programs under AAA, and the future of Democratic institutions.

The memorandum adopted at the Atlanta meeting expressed unanimous approval of the tenant bill.

Advantages of the AAA program to cotton and tobacco were recognized, the memorandum was quoted, but fear was voiced that unless there were revisions the cotton export market will be lost. Modification and eventual abolition of the cotton &loan policy was advocated, as well as gradual but drastic tariff revisions, cancellation of the war debts and currency stabilization.

WASHINGTON, D. C.
POST

APR 28 1935

# The Bankhead-Jones Bill

## Mr. Tannenbaum Presents Statement Of National Committee On Small Farm Ownership.

To the Editor of The Post—Sir: For your correspondent, Stanley F. Morse, to mention Russia, Mexico and Spain in connection with the Bankhead bill is just to draw a red herring across the trail. If the foreign analogy is at all applicable, it would have been much more appropriate to mention the Irish land settlement acts and Denmark's conversion of a feudal into a democratic land system.

So that your readers might really see the group that are supporting the Bankhead farm tenancy bill, you may wish to publish the inclosed statement of the National Committee on Small Farm Ownership and the names attached to it. Incidentally, I should like to make it clear that Senator Bankhead, not myself, is sponsor of the bill, and that I have not been a member of the Brookings Institution staff for a number of years.

FRANK TANNENBAUM.
Washington.

[Inclosure.]

Statement on the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenancy Bill.
By the National Committee on Small Farm Ownership.

No greater problem confronts our rural community than the persistent growth of farm tenancy. Nearly one-half of all our farmers are now tilling land owned by others, and if the present tendency toward converting the independent farmer into a dependent and propertyless tenant continues, then we must abandon hope of achieving a stable and progressive rural civilization. No satisfactory rural community can be either developed or maintained on a tenancy basis. In eight of our States farm tenants represent more than 60 per cent of all farm operators. Nor is the problem a sectional one. Ten of the wheat and corn belt States show from one-third to one-half of the farms operated by tenants, and even in such Western States as Montana and Idaho one-fourth of the farm operators are tenants. Nor is the problem a racial one. There are three times as many white as Negro tenants in the United States, and even in the South there are twice as many white as colored tenants. In view of all these facts we consider the proposed bill for the gradual conversion of the tenant into a landowner as one of the most important and constructive pieces of legislation ever voted upon by the Congress of the United States, and the National Committee on Small Farm Ownership takes this formal occasion to commend Senator Bankhead and Representative Jones for bringing the problem of farm tenancy in the United States before the American Congress, and expresses the hope that the bill which is now before the Senate will be adopted. If passed, it will make possible the growth of a secure and prosperous rural community that owns the land it tills and that can develop to the fullest its share of the great American heritage.

Adopted at a conference of the committee held in Washington, April 19, 1935.

The National Committee on Small Farm Ownership.—George Foster Peabody, chairman; Dr. W. W. Alexander, director, Commission on Interracial Cooperation; the Rev. W. Howard Bishop, past president, National Catholic Rural Life Conference; Dr. Edwin R. Embree, president, Julius Rosenwald Fund; Dr. Ivan Lee Holt, Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America; William Green, American Federation of Labor; Dr. Charles S. Johnson, Fisk University; F. E. Murphy, the Minneapoli Tribune; Dr. Howard Odum, the University of North Carolina; Charlton Ogburn, counsel, American Federation of Labor; Prof. Frank O'Hara, Catholic University; Dr. Clarence Poe, editor, the Progressive Farmer; B. Kirk Rankin, editor, Southern Agriculturist; the Rev. Edgar Schmiedeler, director, Rural Life Bureau, National Catholic Welfare Conference; M. W. Thatcher, the Farmers Educational and Cooperative Union of America; Cal Ward, the Farmers Educational and Cooperative Union of America; Benjamin Hubert, president, Georgia State College; Donald Comer, Avondale Mills, Birmingham, Ala.; Clark Howell, editor, the Atlanta Constitution; Frank O. Lowden, of Illinois; John B. Miller, president, Farmers Cooperative Council; Maj. Robert Russa Moton, Tuskegee Institute; the Right Rev. John A. Ryan, National Catholic Welfare Council; Edgar B. Stern, New Orleans; Louis J. Taber, president, the National Grange; Gen. Robert E. Wood, president, Sears Roebuck, Chicago; J. F. Jackson, general agricultural agent, Central of Georgia Railway; Hugh McRae, president, Southeastern Council.

# THREATS OF BOYCOTT AMUSE COTTON TRADE

Commercial Appeal

## No Such Thing as Labeling Staple, Shippers Reply

Jul-35

## FAIL TO GET MEANING

Memphis, Tenn.

## Aimless Propaganda of "Loose-Jointed Congress," the View Taken by Some Memphis Men in Answer to Charges

Threats of a boycott on American cotton by the International Cotton Congress in Rome brought chuckles from Memphis cotton exporters yesterday as they read the charges of the "loose-jointed congress."

Amused at the charge that American cotton shippers have been "mislabeling their shipments," officials of leading Memphis exporting firms branded the charges aimless propaganda because cotton is not labeled and that each bale speaks for itself.

"I do not understand what W. W. Wigins, president of the congress, means when he says that American cotton firms are mislabeling their shipments," said R. C. Dickinson, vice president and secretary of the American Cotton Shippers Association.

"Cotton isn't labeled, and from that I take it that the statement comes from an uninformed person or that person was not quoted correctly. As far as a boycott is concerned, it is absurd. It couldn't be effective—not by that loose-jointed congress. Practically everybody connected with the cotton business was invited to the meeting."

### Cannot Get Meaning

Nearly all cotton men interviewed admitted that they were unable to get the meaning of "mislabeling cotton shipments."

"That must be an English term," said Arthur Bower, secretary of the Memphis Cotton Exchange. "I don't understand English slang."

Mr. Bower, a former cotton exporter, said that it was impossible to mislabel cotton, because it is not labeled.

R. C. Gregg, manager at Anderson-Clayton & Co., said that, while he did not understand the meaning of the labeling charge, it may mean that the exporters are selling one staple and shipping another. He pointed out that foreign buyers may be dissatisfied with this method.

### Settled by Board

In cases where one staple is sold and another shipped, the difference is settled by an adjustment board and the exporter has to pay a penalty.

W. A. Wooten of C. W. Butler & Co. said that the "congress is making a mountain out of a molehill, in its charge of false bales." Officials of the company pointed out that in their some 30 years of business they have had only a few complaints against false bales.

"Standardization of cotton mill equipment has brought such a change that it is only in rare cases that the weight of the bale is false," Mr. Butler said.

Sam Loring of the American Cotton Shippers Association said that the reports from the congress are nothing but propaganda—which is aimless because it is shooting at something that is not there.

# LEADERS IN SOUTH FORM POLICY BODY TO COMBAT BIAS

Constitution

## Weltner on Committee to Formulate Viewpoints on National Issues; Local Groups To Be Organized.

5-6-35

Atlanta, Ga.

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H. C. Nixon, of Tulane University, is chairman of the committee, Miller said, with Brooks Hays, democratic national committeeman from Arkansas, vice president.

The secretary made public a memorandum outlining purposes of the group. It stated:

"Hitherto the views of the south have often been represented by exclusive economic interests on the one hand, or political sensationalists on the other. No one questions the right of such spokesmen to be heard. The public policy committees, however, seek to present the considered views of still different, and, it is hoped, more general elements of opinion in the southern states in regard to national problems."

### Weltner on Committee.

The southern policy general committee, it was explained in a formal announcement, will be comprised of public policy committees in leading cities of the south.

Miller formerly was field secretary of the Foreign Policy Association. In addition to the chairman and vice chairman of the new group he listed members of the permanent general committee as Richard F. Cleveland, Baltimore; Virginius Dabney, Richmond Times Dispatch; Jonathan Daniels, of the Raleigh News and Observer; R. Beverley Herbert, Columbia (S. C.) lawyer; Dale Miller, associate editor of the Texas Weekly; J. Van Dyke Norman, Louisville banker; James Waller, of Nashville, Tenn., and Philip Weltner, chancellor of the Georgia University System.

While the committee at its recent organization meeting in Atlanta made no effort to formulate a program for the south, Miller said, it saw an exchange of views on a variety of national issues, ranging from the pending Bankhead tenant bill to the cotton and tobacco programs under AAA and the future of democratic institutions.

### Stand Taken.

The memorandum adopted at the Atlanta meeting expressed unanimous approval of the tenant bill.

Advantages of the AAA program to cotton and tobacco were recognized, the memorandum was quoted, but fear was voiced that unless there were revisions the cotton export market will be lost. Modification and eventual abolition of the cotton loan policy was advocated, as well as gradual but drastic tariff revisions, cancellation of war debts and currency stabilization.

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# Small Farm Purchasing Not The Sole Solution

Chester Davis, AAA administrator, said not long ago that the south, though it had 51 per cent of all the people living on farms in the United States, received only 3½ per cent of farm income.

One might seek far without discovering a more terse statement of a proposition that vitally affects the economic, social and political present and future of this section of the nation.

It becomes the more worthy of comment and consideration in view of the fact that prospects favor the assumption that millions and perhaps billions will eventually be made available from federal sources to aid in financing the purchase of small farms in the south by those who now occupy the status of renters, sharecroppers or laborers.

Senator Bankhead of Alabama is industriously pushing his proposal for the formation of a billion-dollar federal corporation to further such a movement. President Roosevelt has available in the vast work relief appropriation a good many millions that may be used in such manner.

A subsidiary but still at least temporarily pertinent fact is that various and sundry agitators and reformers are publicizing, however unfairly and sensationally, the problem represented by unemployed sharecroppers and farm laborers in the south.

The theory of the Bankhead proposal and of all others like it is patently ideal, as is always the case with acts designed to remedy economic and social maladjustment.

It is entirely obvious that this section cannot prosper as it might otherwise in a business way as long as any material percentage of its population is teetering on the ragged edge of economic insecurity as a habitual thing.

It is just as evident that people who must live on that same ragged edge economically will never be other than either a potential or actual source of social unrest and disturbance. Men and women who have little or nothing are never social assets, and on the other side is the fact that thousands of them on relief today make a heavy drain on the resources of the social order. It is the acme of common sense to suggest that they be so situated that they can take care of themselves, at the very least.

It really goes without saying, too, that people who neither own anything nor have any logical hope of acquiring anything are not stable, thoroughly acceptable citizens under our American scheme of government. The possession of property of value in any degree is the greatest single stabilizer and guarantee the political order may hope to have. It is the one best form of insurance against Communism and all the other "isms."

For all the foregoing, however, there must be planning of the most thorough kind if the south is to benefit immediately and properly from the inauguration of a program of the sort here in question. You do not answer all the questions of the man in need by merely giving him an opportunity; you must see to it likewise that he is so disposed and conditioned that he can take advantage of it.

As a matter of plain fact expressed without prejudice, a great percentage of the people of the south who need help are not now of such character that they could be reasonably supposed to make good on their own farms if they could acquire them. For one reason or another, many of those worst off are shiftless and inefficient; mentally, physically and spiritually.

When, as and if a vast program of farm buying is inaugurated in the south, it must be accompanied by satisfactory provisions for sympathetic, intelligent supervision and regulation of the individual if it is apparent that he needs such services. The type chap who will knock palings off the garden fence for fuel rather than go a very few steps farther to a fallen tree in a woods lot is going to be mighty hard to help, in other words, and no matter whether it is his fault or his misfortune that he is as he is.

This is neither a denial of the problem nor an attack on the proposed solution, but merely an effort to state it clearly.

## THE FLAW IN THE BANKHEAD BILL

**Because the largest single group of Negro workers are employed in agriculture, our group should be tremendously interested in S. 2367, the so-called Farmers' Home Bill, introduced by Senator John H. Bankhead of Alabama.**

**The purpose of the bill is to help present farm tenants and sharecroppers, whose condition is admittedly deplorable to establish themselves on their own little farms with their own little farm house.**

**Nearly 45 per cent of American farmers are tenants. The number is growing daily as a result of the reduction in the production of the major cash crops and the dwindling of America's foreign markets for wheat, cotton and corn. Among the most exploited of the sharecroppers and tenants are the Negroes. Something must be done for them.**

**The Bankhead Bill is a step in the right direction. It would take homeless families off the public highways and the relief rolls and place them on their little farms, for which they would be given as much time as they needed to pay.**

**The only flaw in the bill is that these small farmers will be prevented from raising sufficient cash crops to pay taxes, pay the annual amounts due the government and to purchase commodities which they cannot raise on their little patches of ground.**

**This will leave them still at the mercy of the big planters, for whom they will have to work in order to get the necessary cash. The planters will thus be in a superior position to that they occupy today, in that they will not have to furnish their workers either shack, clothing or food.**

**Perhaps, through amendments, this flaw can be remedied. Certainly some such program is needed if the agricultural proletariat of this country is to be saved. The proposed law is of added interest to people in urban centers because it will greatly help the big insurance companies, who own vast areas of farm land now untenanted, but which would be turned over to landless farmers.**

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## Program Will Force New Source of Livelihood, Claim

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NEW ORLEANS, April 26.—Asserting that exports of cotton have dropped 40 per cent and that "some 2,000,000 southern families engaged in farming, ginning, compressing and transporting cotton must find new occupations if the present Roosevelt policy is carried out, A. E. Hohenberg, of Memphis, president of the American Cotton Shippers Association, offered in his annual address here today some suggestions to the administration.

"Let us urge," he said, "that the president enlist the services of a special advisory committee on cotton, modeled after the Kendall business advisory committee, and that this group be composed of practical, experienced and clear-visioned cotton men. Let us urge also a reduction in tariffs, the only sound form of farm relief."

He said that "this philosophy of the greatest good for the greatest number, as applied to cotton, is working in a big way—but to the benefit of the unfortunate farmers of India, the Arabs of Egypt, to the Brazilians and even to the landed gentry of the United States."

He charged that the public is not informed of "governmental subsidized agencies operating under the guise of co-operatives. He said that uncertainty caused by "huge government holdings" is demoralizing to business and asked that commodity loans be made on a commercial basis.

He urged that, pending an adequate adjustment of tariffs a parity payment be developed, which first, "does not deprive the American farmer of 50 per cent of the market for his products, and, second, does not price his cotton out of line with competing fibers in the American market."

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All of which is very interesting.

A tremendous hullabaloo has been raised about the low wage paid by Japanese textile mills, and it may be that this is, as the mill owners say, the sole cause of the influx of Japanese imports.

But before Dixie speaks it would be a good idea for us to know who it is that is speaking for Dixie, and what they are speaking about.

In the first place, it is not the cotton farmer who is speaking, the farmer who in 1932 got five cents a pound for his cotton and who in 1934 got 12 cents. It is not the farmer, whose income was more than doubled in every state in the Union, particularly in the cotton belt, during those two years.

And what are the facts about Japanese cotton purchases and imports?

They are, first, that in 1934 Japan bought more American raw cotton than England, Germany and France put together. Japan paid American cotton growers during the last eight months of the present season $82,000,000, one-third of our total export. Against this, what is the value of her textile exports to us? Even at the "alarming" rate of January and February, the cotton manufacturers would have to increase their exports to Japan by 10-fold to equal the value of Japan's cotton purchases.

Yet, to prevent this drop-in-the-bucket a quota basis, limiting her imports to a 10-year average.

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They are, first, that in 1934 Japan bought more American raw cotton than England, Germany and France put together. Japan paid American cotton growers during the last eight months of the present season $82,000,000, one-third of our total cotton export. Against this, what is the value of her textile exports to us? Even at the "alarming" rate of January and February, have the cotton farmer risk sales of raw cotton to Japan of 35 times that amount.

And how, it may be asked, would a higher tariff turn the trick? The tariff is what has cost America its foreign markets already. Even the New Englanders who have thrived for 75 years on the tariff at the expense of the southern cotton farmer are doubtful of further benefits from higher tariff. They are now suggesting that we put Japan on a quota basis, limiting her imports to a 10-year average.

Quotas, embargoes and things of that sort are invitations to war. And, certainly, we do not want war.

All this excitement over Japanese imports of cotton goods shows how easy it is to mistake a symptom for a cause. It is all right for the cotton manufacturer to complain of his lost markets. He would be false to his interests if he did not look for means to recapture them, and inveigh against conditions that prevent him from doing so. But all the while, he should keep the record straight. Begrudging the cotton farmer a share in the benefits that flow from a program that has saved him from starvation is not the way to go about it.

**BANKHEAD'S TENANT FARMER BILL**

Unexpected opposition to Senator Bankhead's tenant farmer legislation has developed in the Senate, and, surprisingly enough, the spear-head of the opposition is Senator Byrd of Virginia.

Under the legislation proposed by the Alabamian the Federal government would set up a fund for the purpose of aiding tenant farmers to purchase the land they now work. The plan would be modelled after the Home Owners Loan Corporation, and tenant farmers would have the privilege of paying back loans over a long period with the advantage of a low interest rate.

The Anniston Star in a particularly able discussion of the position of the tenant farmer says:

Dr. Rupert B. Vance, of the University of North Carolina, whose "Regional Reconstruction: O Way Out for the South," is a provocative study of the cotton problem, tells us that there are 1,091,000 white tenants in the South and 698,000 colored tenants. The number of Negro tenants decreased by 2,000 during the decade of the Twenties, he says, while the number of white tenants increased by more than 200,000. Moreover, foreign competition, textile substitutes for cotton and the reduction in acreage are tending to increase the number of tenants every year. The mechanical picker promises further to aggravate their distress and hence some measure for the rehabilitation of this segment of our Southern population is urgently needed.

Arthur Young, the noted English traveler and economist, revisiting France after the Revolution, made some epoch-making observations in regard to the changed condition of the French peasant. Whereas their status under the feudal system that prevailed before the Revolution was similar to that of the Southern sharecropper of today, they since have become one of the thriftiest racial classes in the world, being the real backbone of French civilization. Hence, Mr. Young gave expression to a statement that since has become a proverb. "Give a man the secure possession of a bleak rock," he said, "and he will turn it into a garden; give him a nine years' lease of a garden, and he will convert it into a desert."

The tenant farm bill is one of the most far-sighted and constructive pieces of legislation yet proposed for the benefit of the South. While Senator Bankhead has been responsible for relieving the Southern farmer in other respects, the greater part of his accomplishments have been of a temporary nature, that is, he has dealt with emergencies.

Not so, with the tenant farm bill. Its benefits would be of a permanent nature.

The goal sought cannot be accomplished in a day. With approximately 2,000,000 tenant farmers to be dealt with, it cannot be expected that the program could be completed in a year, or even in five years.

But if the South is ever to be relieved of the system which has held it back, now is the time to begin. Critics of the proposal argue, and with some justification, that a majority of the tenant farmers would not have the initiative required to achieve the ownership of their own farms. For generations many tenant farmer families have known nothing better, but until they are given an opportunity to fight their way out, their plight cannot be dismissed with a shrug.

There is nothing compulsory about Senator Bankhead's bill. Land-owners who do not wish to sell their property are not required to do so. But in most cases the land-owners will be more than willing to get rid of their land. At best they realize only a small profit in good times and in times like the past five years, their holdings have been a heavy burden.

Give the South's 2,000,000 tenant farmers the opportunity to own the land they till and this section will have shaken off one of the heaviest shackles left from Reconstruction days.

Chattanooga, Tenn. News
April 23, 1935

## May Solve Farm Tenancy

A BILL which has a tremendous importance to the South has been introduced in Congress. It would establish a Federal corporation, with power to raise $1,000,000,000 through issuing bonds and with the purpose of helping the South solve its farm tenancy problem. One of the objectives of the corporation would be to "establish, make loans for and to assist in establishment of small individual farms and farm homes, with necessary buildings and other structures, live stock, equipment, implements and machinery.

In brief, the corporation would establish on farms of their own many of those now held in virtual slavery by the farm tenancy or share-cropper systems.

Over 70 per cent of all farms in the South are worked by share tenants, that is, by persons who turn over to the land owner a large part of the crops they raise.

It is further pointed out that the masses of rural workers in the South have never been farmers in any proper sense of the word. Two million families — 8,500,000 persons — are merely attached to the soil as tenants or share croppers or otherwise dependent upon owners and bosses. This hugh population includes 3,000,000 Negroes —three-fourths of all the colored farm population of the South— and nearly twice as great a number—5,5000,000—of white persons.

The tenant farmer is a little better off than the share cropper. The tenant works another man's farm and pays with a share of the crops he raises. Share croppers are the subdivision of tenants at the bottom of the scale. They have no equipment of their own. And to them are furnished not only the land and the shacks they live in, but also the mules and other farming equipment including seed, and even their current food—chiefly salt meat, corn bread and molasses. The owner gets a half of the crops raised and furthermore collects for all advances made to the share cropper for food, clothing, equipment, etc. The share cropper is virtually a slave.

The AAA cotton program, of course, has made the plight of these people even worse. A commission has found that tens of thousands of families both white and colored, have been thrown off plantations and onto relief. The proposed government corporation would rehabilitate them.

The promise of "forty acres and a mule" would really be fulfilled.

The Government would probably buy up huge acreages of farm lands now in the hands of insurance companies, land banks, etc., and distribute it in small plots of minimum size required to support farm families. The land, according to the proposal, might be allocated to the new owners either on long leases or through contracts of sale on long time payment under easy terms.

Certainly farm tenancy is one of the worst things in the South today. In the one-crop system, with its vicious circle of tenants owing landlord, landlord owing store, store owing little bank, little bank in the toils of the big city bank, there is little hope for the tenant unless some great factor such as the Federal Government intervenes to break the circle.

The South right now is confronted not only with this tenant system which is the result of the Civil War and Reconstruction, but in the general economic policy directed toward reducing the amount of cotton to be raised. That calls very definitely for an alteration of our economic axis from production for cash to production for use or subsistence fund. But we cannot have subsistence farming under the tenant system. It requires ownership. The operation of some such plan as is proposed in this new Bankhead bill would certainly do a great deal toward making subsistence farming possible.

# AMERICAN COTTON METHODS FLAYED

### Virtual Ultimatum Handed To U. S. Envoy By Action Of World Congress

ROME, May 4.—(AP)—The World Cotton Congress, in its closing session today, decided that the United States must whip its growing, shipping and marketing policy more into line with the demands of European spinners or see its European market look elsewhere for cotton.

That attitude the American delegate immediately communicated to his Government, with recommendations that the United States pay earnest heed to the indications embodied in resolutions adopted by the Congress.

The Congress voted to meet next in 1937 in Egypt, the nation delegates said would benefit most if world continental spinners turn away from the American producers.

The international cotton committee, however, will assemble in Brussels this Fall to discuss the effect of rising silver prices on the cotton trade. That question was tabled during the sessions here.

A report Dr. Henry Charles Taylor, American delegate, forwarded to Washington outlined two possible courses for the Department of Agriculture. They were:

1. "Abandon the foreign cotton market and find other activities for United States cotton farmers who have produced for the foreign market, or

2. "Proceed without delay to develop a positive program for improving the quality of cotton grown and provide for the packing of cotton in even bales, the samples of which will show accurately the quality of the whole bale and provide a means of putting cotton into the foreign market which will make it possible for spinners to buy cotton of the quality they desire."

A series of resolutions adopted by the Congress today expressed general dissatisfaction with present American cotton raising, marketing and baling methods although it said the conference's committee would be willing to cooperate with the United States in settling its difficulties.

It expressed interest in steps taken by the American Government to use metal markers for identification of each bale, and proposed formation of a special committee composed of representatives of the Department of Agriculture and European spinners to work out the problem. The resolution, however, said it was felt American achievements in eliminating "false packing" were thus far "unsatisfactory," and expressed strong disapproval "of the present method of marketing the American crop."

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# SOUTHERN TENANT SYSTEM IS TABOO

## Roosevelt Administration Is Planning to Eliminate Old Agricultural System

WASHINGTON, Jan. 12 (AP)—The transformation—or abolition—of the South's tenant system today stood as another of the long time aims of the Roosevelt administration.

The Mississippi valley committee, which studied land and water resources at the president's direction, said the system should be done away with entirely.

That same thing had been advocated in one form or another by all who have studied the situation, including Southerners themselves. But how was it to be done? That question the Mississippi valley committee answered with generalities.

The problem, however, already had been approached by administration agencies. They believe the result of these experiments will do much to change the systm eunder which most cotton is grown.

**Protection Planned**

Four federal agencies have concerned themselves with the tenant question both directly and indirectly. The AAA sought to prevent its cotton acreage reduction campaigns from forcing "share" farmers off the soil. Nevertheless, officials admit that many renters and share croppers were left without land to cultivate because of the cotton adjustment program.

The unit headed by Secreatry Wallace, however, is co-operating with the federal relief administration in the establishment of model rural communities. The subsistence homesteads division of the interior department is doing similar work and the national resources board report and the public works program are depended upon to give the movement additional impetus.

Many Southern crops, especially cotton, are grown largely by tenants, who are furnished all or a part of their supplies by the landlord. The Mississippi valley committee said the landlords in most instances charge higher than ordinary retail prices, and an interest rate of approximately 20 per cent to cover risks, and take the entire charge out of the tenant's crop at harvest time.

The committee said "the time is ripe to initiate a new, more comprehensive and enlightened system of land reclamation and community planning designed to secure ultimately to the settlers an improved standard of living. This area seems to be an ideal location for such an attempt."

**Social Betterment**

The social betterment plan participated in by the four federal agencies would, broadly speaking, call for planned use of Southern land subject to frequent floods; establishment of subsistence homesteads in sections where some outside employment is available; a "live at home" campaign of education to instill a desire for land ownership and care; organization of a rural rehabilitation corporation to direct efforts toward self-subsistence of former tenants; and use of federal funds to purchase plots for sale to individuals on easy terms, provision of work animals, and other equipment, and adequate financing for the beginning period.

Through the federal relief administration and the AAA about $4,000 families 24,000 of them Arkansas Negroes, are already receiving aid which to date has cost $22 812,771. This sum has been expended for land, equipment, and financing of the families placed on farms to make their own way with the assistance and advice of government representatives.

Administration officials agree that the work done thus far is experimental but they believe it will point the way to the gradual transformation of the South's poor Negroes and whites into prosperous and sturdy citizenry.

## Senator Bankhead's Plan To Assist The Tenants

Not content with what he has already accomplished in the way of raising the price of cotton, Senator Bankhead is on the verge of presenting another bill designed to aid the Southern farmers. This time he is directing his attention particularly toward the tenants. To Russell Kent, *The News-Age-Herald* corresponent in Washington, Senator Bankhead recently disclosed a program by means of which tenant farmers might be given direct aid in the purchase of land. Such a plan, if carried into effect, would be exceedingly wide in its influence. It would tend to alter the social structure in many agricultural sections of the country, and particularly in the South.

To Mr. Kent, Senator Bankhead expressed the belief that "too large a proportion of the farmers do not own their farms. My bill will establish an agency similar to the Home Owners Loan Corporation with authority to make loans to tenants of good moral character and who are dependable in meeting their obligations to purchase farms. Only those who are now tenants will be eligible to secure loans. The loans will bear a low rate of interest, and the principal will be amortized over a period of 30 years. . . . I hold the view that there are large numbers of worthy men who are now tenants, but whose living conditions and those of their families would be improved if they are aided in the acquisition of homes of their own."

Such a philosophy impresses one as being strongly bulwarked by certain conditions which Senator Bankhead called to mind. In his interview, he pointed out that his proposal would apply only to land which is now under cultivation, thereby prohibiting any increase in acreage. He also said that much land is now owned by the Federal Land Banks and that large acreages are in the hands of insurance and mortgage companies, as the result of necessary foreclosures. These farms, most of which are now under cultivation, are for sale. Furthermore, as Senator Bankhead declared, the probability is that there are many absentee landlords who would be willing enough to sell tracts of land to the tenants who are now cultivating them.

The principles involved in the proposed bill demonstrate the extent to which Senator Bankhead has been attempting to combine many situations into a definite program calculated to raise the level of economic welfare and human happiness in the rural districts. In talking with Mr. Kent, he did not state whether or not his new proposals have the support of President Roosevelt. But it may be assumed, in view of the close relationships which have always existed between the Alabama senator and the White House, that this move in the interest of the tenant farmers will be given careful attention by the administration.

## New Efforts To Extend The Market For Cotton

A general principle which *The Birmingham News* has been advocating for some time is set forth in a request which has just been presented to Congress by Representative Fulmer, of South Carolina. Mr. Fulmer is asking for an appropriation of $150,000 to be used in experiments in the use of cotton stalks for cellulose. Behind this idea is the hope that, under favorable conditions, cotton stalks might replace spruce as the main base for many products such as rayon.

As The Associated Press tells us, research along this line has been in progress in North Carolina for several seasons. At Rockingham, N. C., Nicholas W. Dockery has been conducting experiments with the cooperation of the University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Cotton Cooperative Association. At the present time "he has a plan to use the entire cotton plant—boll, lint and all—for cellulose. Only the best cotton would be picked for lint, with the balance mowed down like wheat and processed into cellulose." Representative Fulmer has expressed the belief that the success of Mr. Dockery's plan would prove highly effective in reducing the surplus production of cotton lint.

In our concentration of interest in reduction programs during the last few years, we have tended to overlook many important possibilities of increasing the practical uses of the cotton plant. There is reason to believe that a number of devices could be utilized in selling cotton, even should the export market continue to present a difficult problem for some years to come. The kind of things which have been proposed in the Carolinas gives every appearance of possessing soundness in both theory and practicability.

While one is on the subject of what is being considered in the Carolinas, the remarkable experimental work in Alabama should not be overlooked. Down at Tuskegee Institute, Dr. George W. Carver—quietly and steadily—has been continuing his efforts to find a suitable method of constructing highways from cotton. Already Dr. Carver has given several demonstrations of what he has discovered. The cotton highway materials are said to possess great powers of endurance and to furnish smooth and attractive in appearance. With the proper kind of promotion, it is not beyond reason to expect that these Alabama experiments might develop into something extremely important for the cotton states.

Those who are deeply concerned in the future of the South should watch all of this

Agriculture – 1935

Condition of.

General.

# SOUTHERN TENANT SYSTEM IS TABOO

## Roosevelt Administration Is Planning to Eliminate Old Agricultural System

WASHINGTON, Jan. 12 (AP)—The transformation—or abolition—of the South's tenant system today stood as another of the long time aims of the Roosevelt administration.

The Mississippi valley committee, which studied land and water resources at the president's direction, said the system should be done away with entirely.

That same thing had been advocated in one form or another years by all who had studied the situation, including Southerners themselves. But how was it to be done? That question the Mississippi valley committee answered with generalities.

The problem, however, already had been approached by administration agencies. They believe the result of these experiments will do much to change the systm eunder which most cotton is grown.

**Protection Planned**

Four federal agencies have concerned themselves with the tenant question both directly and indirectly. The AAA sought to prevent its cotton acreage reduction campaigns from forcing "share" farmers off the soil. Nevertheless, officials admit that many renters and share croppers were left without land to cultivate because of the cotton adjustment program.

The unit headed by Secreatry Wallace, however, is co-operating with the federal relief administration in the establishment of model rural communities. The subsistence homesteads division of the interior department is doing similar work and the national resources board report and the public works program are depended upon to give the movement additional impetus.

Many Southern crops, especially cotton, are grown largely by tenants, who are furnished all or a part of their supplies by the landlord. The Mississippi valley committee said the landlords in most instances charge higher than ordinary retail prices, and an interest rate of approximately 20 per cent to cover risks, and take the entire charge out of the tenant's crop at harvest time.

The committee said "the time is ripe to initiate a new, more comprehensive and enlightened system of land reclamation and community planning designed to secure ultimately to the settlers an improved standard of living. This area seems to be an ideal location for such an attempt."

**Social Betterment**

The social betterment plan participated in by the four federal agencies would, broadly speaking, call for planned use of Southern land subject to frequent floods; establishment of subsistence homesteads in sections where some outside employment is available; a "live at home" campaign of education to instill a desire for land ownership and care; organization of a rural rehabilitation corporation to direct efforts toward self-subsistence of former tenants; and use of federal funds to purchase plots for sale to individuals on easy terms, provision of work animals, and other equipment, and adequate financing for the beginning period.

Through the federal relief administration and the AAA about 84,000 families 24,000 of them Arkansas Negroes, are already receiving aid which to date has cost $22 812,771. This sum has been expended for land, equipment, and financing of the families placed on farms to make their own way with the assistance and advice of government representatives.

Administration officials agree that the work done thus far is experimental but they believe it will point the way to the gradual transformation of the South's poor Negroes and whites into prosperous and sturdy citizenry.

## Senator Bankhead's Plan To Assist The Tenants

Not content with what he has already accomplished in the way of raising the price of cotton, Senator Bankhead is on the verge of presenting another bill designed to aid the Southern farmers. This time he is directing his attention particularly toward the tenants. To Russell Kent, *The News-Age-Herald* corresponent in Washington, Senator Bankhead recently disclosed a program by means of which tenant farmers might be given direct aid in the purchase of land. Such a plan, if carried into effect, would be exceedingly wide in its influence. It would tend to alter the social structure in many agricultural sections of the country, and particularly in the South.

To Mr. Kent, Senator Bankhead expressed the belief that "too large a proportion of the farmers do not own their farms. My bill will establish an agency similar to the Home Owners Loan Corporation with authority to make loans to tenants of good moral character and who are dependable in meeting their obligations to purchase farms. Only those who are now tenants will be eligible to secure loans. The loans will bear a low rate of interest, and the principal will be amortized over a period of 30 years. . . . I hold the view that there are large numbers of worthy men who are now tenants, but whose living conditions and those of their families would be improved if they are aided in the acquisition of homes of their own."

Such a philosophy impresses one as being strongly bulwarked by certain conditions which Senator Bankhead called to mind. In his interview, he pointed out that his proposal would apply only to land which is now under cultivation, thereby prohibiting any increase in acreage. He also said that much land is now owned by the Federal Land Banks and that large acreages are in the hands of insurance and mortgage companies, as the result of necessary foreclosures. These farms, most of which are now under cultivation, are for sale. Furthermore, as Senator Bankhead declared, the probability is that there are many absentee landlords who would be willing enough to sell tracts of land to the tenants who are now cultivating them.

The principles involved in the proposed bill demonstrate the extent to which Senator Bankhead has been attempting to combine many situations into a definite program calculated to raise the level of economic welfare and human happiness in the rural districts. In talking with Mr. Kent, he did not state whether or not his new proposals have the support of President Roosevelt. But it may be assumed, in view of the close relationships which have always existed between the Alabama senator and the White House, that this move in the interest of the tenant farmers will be given careful attention by the administration.

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## Time To Act

Senator Harrison has introduced a bill in Congress to correct some of the defects and injustices of the Bankhead Act.

The senator proposes to permit the small farmer to grow three bales tax free, whether he works his own farm or on the shares; to permit holders of certificates to go outside their county and sell them anywhere in the state, and to pay ginners for the extra expense they are put to by the bookkeeping and paper work required under the act.

So far so good. The bill is timely. A great many cotton farmers have been wondering when Secretary Wallace and Mr. Cobb expect to make good the pledges they made last fall when the Bankhead Act was voted on. To date nothing has come out of Washington to indicate that any corrective amendments have been drawn or even considered. On the contrary, rumors are afloat that some of the experts, mistaking the 9 to 1 vote last December as a blanket approval of the act, are not bothering themselves much about the pledges that brought about that approval.

Of course, these pledges will be carried out, but since the complaints are serious and the time is short, Secretary Wallace ought to get to work.

Senator Harrison's proposals touch one or two of the sore spots, but there are others. His bill goes largely to the act itself. What is needed is to get at the administration of the act.

The first move to make is to throw some real safeguards around the local committees which pass upon the allotments of acreage These committeemen must be free from political or personal influences. They should be chosen without haste, and everybody who grows cotton should have a hand in choosing them. Their chief business should be farming. Most of the committeemen last year were sincere and honest, but mistakes occurred. Depending largely upon the farmer for information about his average, the committees were sometimes deceived, and the honest man suffered because of a reduced allotment. The thing to do is to set up a state or district board to hear appeals. If a citizen under the law can appeal a $5 fine from a justice's court, a farmer certainly should be allowed to appeal to a fair and impartial board when his entire year's living is at stake.

A second correction should take in both the land and the man when arriving at a basis for allotment. The act now considers the land only. For instance, a tenant living on a farm last year where he made 10 bales of cotton moves to a farm with a five-year average of only five bales. It is probable that he has a large family trained only in raising cotton. By the rigid terms of the Bankhead Act he is limited to half his last year's production, is brought to financial distress, loses faith in the plan and in his government and grows bitter against the landlords. The act ought to be so amended that in such an instance 50 per cent consideration would be given the land and 50 per cent the man. This would iron out many of the troubles and discontents of the tenant farmer.

Not only would such a correction right a wrong, but it would go far toward solving the problem of tenant discontent for the landlord.

Whatever is done should be done right away. Spring is around the corner. The cotton farmer is already laying plans to pitch his crop. He must know what he is going to be allowed to do. He cannot wait until planting time.

The sooner Secretary Wallace acts the better.

### BANKHEAD AND THE TENANTS

First reports of Senator Bankhead's proposal to aid the tenant farmer give promise that the plan may be instrumental in breaking down the system of share-cropping which has unquestionably retarded the South.

Senator Bankhead's proposal would establish an agency similar to the Home Owners Loan Corporation which would provide financial aid for tenants to purchase lands they now have in cultivation.

Rentals now being paid would ultimately finance the purchase by each tenant. The loans for the purchase would bear a low rate of interest and would be amortized over a period of 30 years.

Secretary Wallace has not publicly stated his attitude toward the Bankhead proposal, but supporters of the measure are hopeful that both he and President Roosevelt will approve of the plan, or some similar legislation.

The system of share-cropping had its real origin among small farmers during the period following the Reconstruction, although it was not unknown before the War Between the States. Since that time it has held its strangle hold through generations with little or no opportunity for relief from the burden. During normal times, the farmers under this system have complained little, during hard times, their pleas have not been heeded. Upon the whole tenant farmers have been reticent and forbearing.

**Farming is at best a way of life. In the South particularly, agriculture has never been able to support properly men who work for another on halves or work for wages. It has been an utter impossibility for a farmer to raise a family on a scale in keeping with the lowest of American standards unless he himself owned the land and instruments by which he lived. In other words, the margin of profit from farming is too low to provide for both the man who does the work, and the man who owns the land.**

Attempts at farming on a commercial basis have failed almost without exception in the South. There inevitably come periods when the outlays for machinery and overhead are too heavy to bear. The work of a farm is such that a man must be working for himself. It is impossible to hire two men at wages to do the work one man will do on his own farm.

In spite of the increases in the price of farm commodities, the New Deal so far has not accomplished for farming what it has for labor and industry While the price of cotton may have doubled, the cost of what cotton farmers must buy has trebled. Senator Bankhead's proposal offers an opportunity for the farmer to catch up, so to speak.

It is only during a period such as the present that there is any possibility of accomplishing anything permanent for the relief of the tenant farmer. With the return of normal times, his plight will be forgotten, because he himself will cease to complain under the encouragement of a mere existence which has been his greatest reward even in good times.

The elimination of the tenant farmer system would be a lasting benefit. In some instances the outlay of funds by the New Deal have been for benefits of doubtful permanency, at least. Furthermore, a great portion of the money spent by the Federal government has gone into buildings, dams, roads, etc. The Bankhead proposal would not construct material things, it would free men who have not before known freedom. The most lasting benefits ever achieved have been through the creation of human values.

Provide a way by which every small farmer in the South may own the soil from which he makes his living and make adjustments so that he will bear only his just share of taxes, and there will indeed be a new era in the South. The farmer does not require, nor demand luxuries and shorter hours. All that he asks is an opportunity to make enough to feed and clothe his family in a decent manner.

Once the farmer is able to resume his normal purchasing power, the rest of the country need have no fears.

The plan as outlined by Senator Bankhead would go a long way toward achieving this end.

# WALLACE WILL HEAR TENANTS' COMPLAINT

### Special Unit Set Up For Share Croppers

### PLAN FOR INVESTIGATIONS

**Relief Roll Check to Be Made —Back-to-Farm Movement Held Responsible For Some of Turmoil**

BY GEORGE MORRIS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20. — A special unit will be set up in the Department of Agriculture, it was announced today, for handling complaints made by share croppers and others desiring to protest against the manner in which the crop control program has been administered.

Many complaints have been received by various departments, but there has been no assembling place for them in the past. Each complaint will be followed through, and the person against whom complaints are made will be vindicated or such penalties administered as provided by law.

**Will Check Rolls**

The announcement of Secretary Wallace, that the relief administrator would be asked to make a survey to show how many persons with recent farm experience are now on the relief rolls, was followed by a later statement that since 1930 more than 1,250,000 persons have returned to the country from industrial centers.

This information has the effect of setting at naught the claim that acreage and production control have had the effect of putting many tenants on the relief rolls, and driving them from the farms. The return of many former farmers have meant that, by reason of their former good record, they have been taking the place of dispossessed tenants, or that they themselves have gone on the relief rolls.

**Back To Farm**

Considerable capital has been made of the relatively high percentage of persons on relief in the 10 principal cotton producing states. It has been argued that benefits received by one class has been offset by the number forced upon the relief rolls.

Department of Agriculture information would indicate that the excess represents principally the "back to the farm" movement on the part of industrial workers with farm experience.

Agriculture—1935
Condition of.

General

Chattanooga Tenn. Times
Sept. 27, 1935

# Cotton Tenant System Scored In Publication

## AAA Aids Landlord, Leaves Workers Out in Cold, Race Body Declares.

Atlanta, Aug. 27.—(A. P.)—The agricultural adjustment program was seen as an aid to landlords "while the tenant is left open to risk on every side," in a publication just issued, "The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy."

The authors are Dr. W. W. Alexander, chairman of the Commission on Interracial Relations; Edwin R. Embree, president of the Rosenwald fund, and Charles S. Johnson of Fisk University, Nashville.

After two years' intensive study in the South they concluded that the cotton tenancy system is "our greatest social humiliation."

They found that the question is becoming more and more a white problem. The number of tenant families in the cotton belt was placed at 1,790,783, of which 1,091,944 are white and 698,839 Negroes. This gave a total number of approximately 5,500,000 white individuals and slightly over 3,000,000 Negroes in the tenant class.

Dr. Alexander, one of the authors, is now in Washington as assistant administrator to Undersecretary of Agriculture Rexford G. Tugwell, who has charge of the rural resettlement program of the United States Government.

**Tenants Run Most Farms.**

The publication said that out of every 100 cotton farms over 60 are operated by tenants. It set forth that up to the Civil War the cotton laborers were Negroes, but that after emancipation "white families began to compete with Negroes for the new kind of slavery involved in tenancy. The white tenants have increased steadily, filling the new openings in the expanding industry and taking places left vacant by Negroes who migrated from the plantations to Northern and Southern cities."

The investigators charged that the Government under the AAA "has assumed many of the risks of the land owners and thrown them on the tenants."

In another place they stated "it is but the blunt truth to say that under the present system the land owner is more and more protected from risk by Government activity while the tenant is left open to risk on every side. Only after he loses first what property he may possess and then his tenure, does the tenant come to the form of risk insurance designed for him—relief."

Reorganization of farming in the cotton States so as to place the tenants on lands of their own through some new distribution of land ownership is suggested as the way out of the situation. The Federal Government, it is suggested, should buy up huge acreages of farm lands and distribute them in small plots to tenants on long lease or through contract of sale on long-time payment on easy terms. It is also suggested that the Government set up service agencies to supervise, guide and aid the new home owners.

Chattanooga, Tenn. Times
September 27, 1935

# RE-HOMESTEADING OF TENANTS URGED

## Federal Subsidizing Asked in Brain Trusters' Book.

### AAA Program Termed Aid to Cotton Landlords, With Workers Open to Risk.

ATLANTA, Sept. 26 (AP).—Federal subsidizing of re-homesteading in the cotton south, to end the conditions surrounding tenant farmers, is advocated in "The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy," a publication just issued.

Dr. W. W. Alexander, chairman of the commission on interracial relations; Edwin R. Embree, president of the Rosenwald fund, and Charles S. Johnson, of Fisk university, are authors. The book contains conclusions reached after a two-year study.

Dr. Alexander now is in Washington as assistant administrator to Undersecretary of Agriculture Rexford G. Tugwell, who has charge of the rural resettlement program of the federal government.

The AAA program, the publication reported as an aid to landlords with the tenant being left to "open risk on every side."

The book said that although the white tenant now represented about 60 per cent. of those on cotton lands —a condition gradually increasing since the War Between the States as whites replace Negroes, due to migrations to the north and a greater death rate among Negro children—"a half-million white workers continue to keep themselves in virtual peonage."

**Result of System.**

Such a condition, the publication said, was the direct result of the system whereby the landlord controlled everything, even the diet of his tenants.

Tenants, the authors reported, continually were in debt and because it was to the interest of the landlord to keep them so, they could not raise their standard of living under existing circumstances.

Under the proposed re-homesteading of the land in the south, which the book reported is now in the hands of banks, insurance companies and other large institutions, the government would be asked to buy up these properties and re-distribute the land.

The properties, under the proposal, would be cut up into small plats of probably twenty to forty acres in the cotton area, the land to be allocated to the new owners—tenants—on long leases or through contracts of sale on long-time payments on easy terms.

Service agencies are proposed to supervise, guide and aid the new homesteaders.

It is proposed that the capital investment for each family do not exceed $1,000 to $1,500. Co-operative farm colonies and communities are suggested as experiments in order to get the best for the new homesteaders at as small cost as possible.

The other alternatives to the "collapse" of the present system, the publication said, are: (1) starvation; (2) permanent support on the relief rolls; (3) the finding of new work in the cities."

New York Evening Post

SEP 26 1935

# COTTON TENANCY CALLED U. S. SHAME

## AAA Flayed as Using System to Shift Risks From Farm Owners to Renters

ATLANTA, Sept. 26 (AP).—The cotton tenancy system is called "our greatest social humiliation" in a publication just issued by three educators after two years' intensive study in the South.

The group declared that the Government under the agricultural adjustment program "has assumed many of the risks of the land owners and thrown them on the tenant."

The authors of the report are Dr. W. W. Alexander, chairman of the Commission on Inter-Racial Relations; Edwin R. Embree, president of the Rosenwald Fund, and Charles S. Johnson of Fisk University. Dr. Alexander is an assistant to Undersecretary of Agriculture Tugwell.

**Becoming a White Problem**

Declaring that the question is becoming more and more a white problem, they reported that more than 60 of every 100 cotton farms are operated by tenants.

The number of tenant families in the cotton belt was placed at 1,790,783, of which 1,091,944 are white and 398,839 Negroes.

**"It is but the blunt truth," the report said, "to say that under the present system the land owner is more and more protected from risk by Government activity while the tenant is left open to risk on every side. Only after he loses, first, what property he may possess, and then his tenure, does the tenant come to the form of risk insurance designed for him—relief.**

"One obvious reason for the wholesale neglect of the tenant lies in the fact that the Agricultural Adjustment Administration organized this program under the direction of the planters themselves.

**Tenant Gets Little**

The authors charged that in all areas the benefits of crop production accrued ultimately to the landlord and merchant and that the tenant received little therefrom.

The report said the Federal relief to the cotton belt "was translated into plantation terms and the system (except for further displacement and impoverishment of tenants) was bolstered and given a new lease of life."

Reorganization of farming in the cotton States to place the tenants on lands of their own through some new distribution of land ownership was suggested as the way out of the situation.

The Federal Government, it was suggested, should buy huge acreages of farm lands and distribute them in small plots to tenants on long leases or through contract of sale on long-time payment on easy terms. It also was suggested that the Government set up service agencies to supervise, guide and aid the new home owners.

**Hundreds Strike in Arkansas**

WYNNE, Ark., Sept. 26 (AP).—The threat of a paralyzing strike hung over the Eastern Arkansas cotton fields today as the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union claimed that hundreds of pickers already have quit work in protest against the current wage scale.

While union leaders asserted the walkout was spreading, plantation owners and officials discounted reports from the cotton country that 4,000 laborers had heeded the union call to strike for $1 per hundred pounds of cotton picked.

James Robertson, Cross County deputy prosecuting attorney, said last night that every farmer will be deputized, if necessary, "to prevent violence" or any attempts to force Negroes from working in cases where they want to work. Officers in other counties indicate similar action would be taken.

The fear that the strike may become serious was indicated when Robertson said he had heard "2,000 outside pickers will be brought into this area to pick cotton if the strike reaches proportions to make such action necessary."

Robertson charged the union collected $35,000 in dues last year "from ignorant Negroes and white people," and that the strike was called because farmers and sharecroppers had quit paying dues and the pickers looked like the best pickings.

H. L. Mitchell, union secretary said at Memphis that planters were paying only 35 cents per hundred pounds to pickers.

He denied the union membership would resort to violence to obtain its demands.

SOUTHWEST AMERICAN

SEP 28 1935

# THE TENANT PROBLEM

The problem of farm tenancy, especially in the South, is continually bobbing up and never settled. A new book on the subject has just been published by three distinguished men. One of them is assistant to Rex Tugwell, administrator of the resettlement program. The program which the authors of this book offers is not greatly different from the Bankhead farm loan bill which was proposed in the last congress, passed by one house and held up in the other.

Farm tenancy is undoubtedly one of the pressing economic problems of the South. There is too much disposition to believe that it is caused entirely by the exploitation of one class by another class, and that it can be cured by passing a law about it. Neither is wholly true.

Farm tenancy has been a growing condition since the Civil war. If you add tenants and share-croppers to-

gether, you find that the whites predominate. The census of 1930 showed 338,800 white and 390,400 negro share-croppers in the Southern states—a share-cropper being defined as a farmer who has no land, no tools, no work stock, no money, but depends entirely on his landlord to furnish all of those things and works the crop for a share of it. There were in that same year 752,200 whites and 307,600 negroes who were tenants in the proper meaning of that word, which is a farmer who rents land and furnishes his own work stock and equipment.

The plan proposed in the Bankhead bill, and endorsed in principle in the book just out, is to have the government buy up land and sell it to tenants and share-croppers on long and easy terms, meanwhile supplying all manner of supervisory services.

The system as it now exists grew out of conditions. It is simply the best plan people have yet devised for meeting a practical situation. It will be improved, if at all, as the individual capacity of the individual farmer is raised. No legislative legerdemain will do it.

## "KING COTTON'S SLAVES"—

The following are a few significant quotations from T. C. Carpenter's expose of the share-cropper system of the South, in the October issue of Scribner's Magazine.

"The spirit of slavery and exploitation dominates the system."

"Its first attack is upon the individual cropper. Its effect upon him may be written in one word, 'submission.'"

"For living quarters the share-cropper's family is furnished an unsightly shack, with two or three rooms . . . the whole concern being for the crop, none for the croppers."

"The startling fact about this situation is that the croppers have reached a state of mental servitude that they are willing to submit meekly to such conditions and to having their children grow up in a state of physical and mental slavery."

"They are really plantation peons."

"Federal aid to agriculture has not helped, but has hurt the share-cropper. It has not strengthened, but has weakened his position."

"The race question was never a real issue in this struggle . . . But it is an old trick to play Negro tenants against whites and whites against Negroes in order to keep both in due submission."

Mr. Carpenter says that, contrary to usual notions, two-thirds of the share-croppers of the South "are white." He concludes:

"The tenant problem is thus a national one. The states have not, will not, and probably cannot adequately deal with it. It now is, and until solved will continue to be, the most important domestic question before the American people."

Those who have seen the plight of Negro share-croppers in such plantation counties as Grimes, Robertson, and Milam Counties in Texas, know that Mr. Carpenter's charges are not only true, but in many respects they are conservative. I think the article is well worth reading.

**PORTLAND, ORE.**
**OREGONIAN**

DEC 4 1935

### King Cotton A-Horse

King Cotton is riding for a fall that will shake America, and the administration is whooping it on. There is no other way of interpreting the action of the AAA, announced this week, in offering new four-year reduction contracts to the growers. That means the present impossible situation will be "frozen" for four years more, and at the end of the four years either the subsidy will be increased or the collapse will come.

Cotton has been America's most important cash crop for more than a century and a half. In the earlier years, American cotton literally revolutionized the economic and social system of the world. It was an immeasurable factor in the growth of the machine age. And under this impetus, production swept westward from Georgia and the Carolinas through Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee to Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas. The ground behind was left impoverished but supporting the densest rural population in the United States. Today, Texas and Oklahoma produce nearly one-half the total crop, yet the old southeast still grows cotton and little besides.

These hapless people (contrary to the general belief, there are only 698,839 colored tenants as compared with 1,091,944 white tenants) live in weather-stained little shacks, eating fat pork, meal and molasses. Studies have shown that the negro share-croppers possess an average of 0.6 per cent of a book per family. The occasional large and comfortable house is the home of a landlord. The "people" are uneducated and living from day to day on the landlord's credit. They seldom are permitted to raise gardens because the landlord wants all the land for cotton. They do not know how to grow gardens.

With the cotton tenants and share-croppers thus close to the starvation line, the bottom is falling out of the world market. The United States was once the only important producer. Now there are fifty producing countries. Egypt grows the best cotton. India forges steadily to the fore. Brazil has a larger available acreage than the United States. Cotton plantations are appearing in many sections of Africa and southern Asia.

There is absolutely no way in which America can hold its world predominance unless it is by flooding markets with cheaper cotton than the other countries can produce, thus preventing the introduction of cotton in these countries. And the only way America can undersell the competitors is by low-cost production.

The fact is that this low-cost production is possible. Experiments have shown that the use of tractors makes six-cent cotton profitable. Old-style methods such as are in use throughout the southeast, with a family using one mule, cost approximately $14.20 an acre, whereas tractor methods in the west cost only $5.20 an acre. A recent publication by the University of North Carolina asserts:

> In the old cotton area of the southeast, the average area cultivated was 10 to 20 acres by a family with one mule and plow. In the western area the average family can handle from 100 to 150 acres, using two-row equipment drawn by four or six mules. The tractors increase this acreage even more.

The logical answer is obvious. The southwest is capable of producing all the cotton for America and for America's world market, and of producing it at a profit. That part of the southeast which cannot, for topographical or other reasons, make the shift to large-scale production, should turn to other forms of farming. That is the only way the soil can be restored to fertility and the people to self-support.

### FARM AND FACTORY

In working out its economic destiny, the South undoubtedly is handicapped by the universal assumption that this section is first of all agricultural, and that industry is now, and will continue to be, secondary to utilization of the soil. In a way, it is unfair to the South to be so regarded, and thus make more difficult the establishment and maintenance of a balanced economy in which industrial payrolls will supplement the wealth produced on the farm. President Roosevelt's recent letter to Tuskegee officials illustrates the general feeling regarding agriculture and industry in the South, that is so universally shared. "Agriculture is, and probably will continue to be, the chief source of income for the South," the President wrote.

Of course it is true that now and in the years ahead agriculture is basic in the South, but the developments which have been under way since the beginning of the present century prove that as time goes on manufacturing and industry are going to become more and more important in this region, and that our farms will furnish the products to feed and clothe the workers in the cities and the city workers will in turn find the farmers the best customers for the products of their factories.

It is perhaps natural that the South with its millions of acres of arable land, its equable climate and ideal growing conditions should be looked upon first of all as a farming region. Southerners come honestly by their traditions of agricultural dominance. They are adherents of Thomas Jefferson and when Jefferson delivered his great first inaugural address in 1801, in which he outlined "what I deem the essential principles of government," he emphasized one of the most important obligations of government as being "encouragement of agriculture, and of commerce as its handmaid." Agriculture came first in his mind and it has naturally remained first in the minds of his followers throughout the years. But, without minimizing the importance of agriculture, we of today can at the same time appreciate that there must be buyers of farm products and that these buyers are the employes of industries and factories in the cities. In the complexities of modern economic life neither farm nor factory is self-contained. Each depends upon the other. Hence for a balanced economy in the South we must continue to strive for an industrial development which shall supplement the agricultural economy which is our greatest heritage.

Agriculture-1935

General.

Condition of

Charlottesville, Va.
PROGRESS

MAR 22 1935

## Poverty in the South

So accustomed are we to accounts of the material progress the South has made during this century that the revelations of a committee which has been studying the South's land tenure sysem, its credit methods and other phases of its economic life, will come as a very disagreeable jolt to our complacency.

The students who made this survey, which was financed by the Rosenwald Foundation, find the condition of tenant farmers so deplorable that throughout their 250-page report they speak of tenants as "peasants." Of these "peasants," the group discovered, 1,091,944 are white and 698,839 colored. The number of whites in this class is constantly growing and the number of colored persons is decreasing.

But for assistance from the government, the report states, there would have been widespread starvation in the last few years. But government aid is not an unqualified boon:

"The furnishing of tenants with seed and tools and food and clothing at the traditional margin of from 20 to 30 per cent above cash prices has taken on a new aspect since it has become possible for landowners to secure their needed funds from the Farm Credit Administration at rates varying from 4½ to 6½ per cent. As a result the government finds itself an involuntary, if not uunsuspecting, partner in usury. It has furnished credit for a thoroughly reprehensible system of extortion."

The plight of the share-cropper in the deep South has lately been the subject of a good deal of comment in the press. He is revealed as a man caught on a treadmill, running more deeply into debt because he can never organize his finances sufficiently for him to escape the clutches of those who sell him goods at an exorbitant profit.

These stories have not always been trustworthy, because they dealt with specific cases rather than general conditions, and were no doubt sensationalized for public consumption. The Rosenwald survey provides carefully gathered, verified and integrated information upon which students of the problem may rely.

What the solution of the problem is we do not profess to know. The Rosenwald investigators advocate a system of peasant "proprietorship." But it is obvious that some steps should be taken to relieve the situation. We are not advocating sudden, sensational methods, such as the government would be likely to employ, but a program adopted after a careful study which took into consideration the welfare of all parties concerned in the operation of the tenant system and avoided the kind of sentimentality which would pamper the victims of the system.

The South cannot maintain its civilization with two millions of its inhabtants sinking into illiteracy hopefulness and inescapable debt.

# Croppers Tell Of Sufferings

## Speak at Exciting Parley on Negro at Howard University

5-20-35

By Marguerite Young

(Daily Worker Washington Bureau)

WASHINGTON, May 19.—Out at Howard University where Uncle Tom educators for years have been teaching Negroes to aspire to nothing better than to share with the white rulers of America in exploiting the masses, an excitingly new kind of textbook is being written here this week-end.

It is being drafted in a three-day national conference, which began yesterday, on "The Position of the Negro in the Crisis." In this gathering of about 500 delegates, called by the Joint Committee on Nat. Recovery and Social Science Division of Howard Univ., it is not the old educators who are leading. It is their former students and others, especially workers and farmers and prominent young intellectuals of all political convictions and of both races. They are presenting the many aspects of the two most important things in Negro life today—the New Deal's intensification of the age-long exploitation of the Negro people—an exploitation even more gross than that of the white people—and of the Negroes' decided turn toward mass action by united Negro and white working men and women, to ease their plight.

As was to be expected, the workers and farmers have contributed the most stirring chapters thus far.

Share croppers and tenants, ragged Negro and white working farmers from the terror-ridden cotton kingdom of Dixie told their story last night. It was cold comfort for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration—so cold that a Roosevelt official hastened to tell the capitalist press that they were not farmers at all, but people misled by "radicals." Seemingly the Agricultural Department couldn't take it: the contrast between these working farmers who picketed the building carrying a placard reading, "The A. A. A. made it worse," and their own landlords on jamboree in Washington last week, to praise the same New Deal device for giving to them what it took from the poor farmers, was too much. President Roosevelt last week called critics of the A.A.A. "high and mighty people" and "liars." Here came critics who were obviously neither—and obviously determined to use their own weapon, organized mass action, to make their living endurable.

### Croppers Unite

Even more important, these tenants and croppers represented two militant unions, the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the Share Croppers Union, in united front action for the first time. Al Jackson, Negro organizer of the latter, and several Negro farmers from still unorganized counties of Alabama, joined the Arkansas Tenant Farmers Union delegation headed by its white secretary, H. L. Mitchell, on Friday, in a series of visits to Roosevelt's officials, including Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Rexford Tugwell. Here is the working class united front in exhilarating actuality: with the greatest enthusiasm, the two groups greet each other, fight together.

The Share Croppers' Union has been an underground movement from the start and has functioned continuously despite all terror. The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union has worked in the open, but Mitchell told the Daily Worker:

**"We're making preparations now for underground work wherever necessary. We have already reorganized where we had to. The Share Croppers Union is giving us much help in explaining to us its methods of work where they have been successful. We have had more success than they in bringing white tenants into our union, but they have been able to work where we haven't been able to without reorganization."**

### Mutual Help

Al Jackson said: "Of course, we learn from each other. We greet this unity, we must continue it and strengthen it, the better to build each union.

## Fooling The Farmer

Increasing evidence that those in charge of the farm program in Washington are thoroughly familiar with what is going on is furnished by the very prompt and conclusive way in which Cully Cobb, chief of the AAA cotton division, disposed of a recent "demonstration" in Washington by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. A group of pickets, sponsored by the Socialist party, paraded in front of Mr. Cobb's window. They were led by one Ward Rogers, whose record as a radical is well known hereabouts. Acting as spearheads of the group were H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the union, and E. B. McKinney, its negro vice president.

Commerce Report

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Newspaper

Declaring that the leaders were members of radical groups whose chief aim is to promote racial and class unrest, Mr. Cobb very properly recalled that such leaders care little about the southern tenant farmer. "They are not farmers," he said. "They don't know a cotton stalk from a Jimson weed. Their chief interest seems to be Socialism or Communism."

Mr. Cobb might well have gone further. He might have recalled that the promoters of these "demonstrations" do the farmer for whom they profess to speak a distinct disservice. Of course it must be remembered that the liberalized program of agriculture, the increasing trend towards raising the standards of labor, have caused radicals to resent the improved economic conditions. These strides make it all the more difficult for them to spread unrest, and when they are unable to do this their meal ticket is gone.

The utter absurdity of the protests made by this group is best illustrated by comparing it with the farmers' trek to Washington last week. That was a movement originated by farmers and participated in by farmers. They had a very definite purpose of showing the president and the Congress that the AAA program is satisfactory. It further illustrates the point that when and if the real farmer is displeased with a situation, he will make himself heard in a firm and orderly way. It will not be through a picketing group made up of radicals who, as Mr. Cobb very aptly says, "don't know a cotton stalk from a Jimson weed."

It may be after all that this "demonstration" will bring its lesson home. It shows how easy it is for people to be misled. It also shows what consequences might come from foolish participation in things of this sort, and how absurd and dangerous it is for the tenant farmer to hook up with a bunch of radicals who have no interest except that of stirring up strife. These would-be saviors of the tenant farmer showed their ignorance of the problem when their leader, Norman Thomas, made the very startling discovery that the solution lay in "machine farming with gang plows, mechanical cotton pickers and increased acreage."

President Roosevelt has pledged his efforts to help the farmer. He has offered a program. It is working. Unless and until something better is offered, the tenant farmer as well as the landlord will do well to stand shoulder-to-shoulder and make the plan a success.

Atlanta, Ga. Constitution
May 17, 1935

## A LONELY SENTINEL

In answering a set of questions based on his recent fulminations about secession, in the Market Bulletin, Commissioner of Agriculture Linder puts himself deeper in the hole than ever.

The questions, propounded by J. L. Haralson, secretary of the Donalsonville and Seminole Chamber of Commerce, and Mr. Linder's answers to them, appear in full in the news columns of this issue.

Mr. Linder still bitterly protests that "for the first time" negroes and whites voted together in the election on the Bankhead bill. Surely, the commissioner knows better than that. Negroes have been voting in every regular election held in the south for more than a half century.

Large numbers cast votes in the repeal referendum of this week, their participation in support of the existing dry laws being practically unanimous as urged by leading negro ministers—but the commissioner continues his attack on the administration on the ground that it is responsible for voting by negroes.

The negro farmer, both as land owner and tenant, plays a large part in southern agriculture and it was proper for him, both as a farmer and a citizen, to participate in the referendum on the Bankhead bill. Not only were his own interests at stake, but those of his white neighbors as well.

Mr. Linder continues to wave the secession banner on the ground that the supreme court "rendered an opinion which says, in effect, that a negro cannot be convicted of a crime against a white woman unless negroes are in the jury box to try him."

The supreme court did nothing of the kind. What it ruled was that negroes cannot be excluded, because of their race, from the jury panels, which is an entirely different thing from holding that a negro cannot be tried unless a member of his race is on the trial jury.

The whole south has accepted the judgment of the court, but Mr. Linder, who, like "the boy who stood on the burning deck from whence all but him had fled," remains as the lone sentinel of secession.

The state supreme courts of Alabama and Mississippi have instructed the jury commissioners of these two states that eligible negroes must be included in the jury panels or else all convictions will be voided in advance.

Any Georgia schoolboy could tell the commissioner that membership on a jury panel does not assure a place on a trial jury, since any prospective juror can be struck by either the state or the defense.

In justice to Mr. Linder, and in accordance with his request to Mr. Haralson, The Constitution publishes his statement "in full."

He is fortunate that it is no longer than it is, for the more he writes the deeper he becomes involved.

# *Proper Mobilization of Southern Resources Would Make This Section Richest in the World, Says Haden*

*By emulating the trading example of Venice, the south could become the most prosperous spot on earth, declares Charles J. Haden, chairman of the Federal Farm Debt Adjustment Commission of Georgia, in the following excerpts from an address delivered before the Atlanta branch of the American Institute of Banking. The address points out that the south must capitalize on its matchless resources if it is to assume its rightful position as one of the world's most favored areas.*

The south in 1935 repeats a commercial blunder of the south in 1858. If our forefathers had rejoined their cotton land in doing so would have given employment to the then almost exclusively white population, the Piedmont hills) and sold the woven garments, as the English did, they would have become by far the richest people of the earth. If the people of the south today would refine their cotton, grow livestock with the ten billion pounds of cottonseed food they grow (cottonseed meal is the finest of the foods used by the cattle growers of the northwest) and reverse the wheels of trade by sending to the north their food supplies, the south could now become the richest spot on the face of the earth.

No other master crop except cotton yields both food and clothing. Even with the extremely limited acreage under the Bankhead act, we produce more than ten billion pounds of cotton seed. The possibilities of this vast food reserve transmuted into livestock, and into the many forms of foods and feeds, for which it is already an established source, with the work and wages needed in these processes, is an easy matter of computation to show the southern states can become dominant in industry.

Imagine the products of the cotton plant processed and conserved at home. Take into account the safe and enduring storage qualities of these products; consider its possibilities thus handled and backed by a credit system, modeled on the once powerful Bank of Venice; think of a people turning into account the great endowments of nature which we in the south have. A near monopoly on cotton, the greater number of growing days in the year, with the greatest variety of agricultural products possessed on any one spot on earth, with a corresponding credit to back our banks, our own merchant vessels to carry our trade, what might be done with the concentrated effort of the determined people.

But, how does it actually work now. The cottonseed cake made by the oil mills in the south is mainly shipped to Denmark and northwest America. That, when mixed with cottonseed, and fed to the cows that give the milk that makes the buter that supplies the tables in Berlin. Paris and London; of the northwest, fed to the cows that give the milk that makes the butter that mixes with the cottonseed oil they buy from the south. and supplies the tables of the south. We lose the freights, we lose the profits, we lost the commerce, we lose the labor. and this loss goes on where hundreds of thousands of people clamor for work, and hold out the tin cup of the mendicant to the Federal Emergency Relief.

**An Overworked Servant.**

We overwork a faithful servant. We dispose of our precious product in the raw and allow the profit to be made by those who refine it. The orators for secession urged that we resist the oppression and "fly to arms," but we overlooked the serious question, "Whose arms." There was not a factory south of the Potomac or the Ohio manufacturing guns or gunpowder.

The cotton crop of 1860 yielded to the south approximately $200,000,000. After this had been marketed, and in the early summer of 1861, the Confederate government, as a war measure, impressed all specie (gold and silver) in the Confederate states, and found less than $4,000,000.

Where were the proceeds of the $200,000,000 cotton crops that had just been marketed. This is the answer: The southern planter had borrowed from the factor, at one of the southern port cities, the money to operate his farms. and when the settlement was made, he gave the planter a credit. Then the New York banker who had rediscounted the planter's note for the factor, gave the factor a credit. Then the British financier who had advanced the money to the New York banker, gave the New York banker a credit. A very small fraction of the crop was ever paid in money.

By tradition, we commonly exaggerate the wealth of the old south. Closely studied, we find it is largely composed of cotton plantations, big white houses, and masses of black faces, but with very small cash reserves. They staked it all on a single throw of the dice.

Although Georgia was first to establish a state university, and the first to found a woman's college with power to confer university degrees, yet we have written few, and published none, of our own schoolbooks.

Although our people were essentially of a military spirit and superb soldiers, we depended on others to provide us with sinews of war.

**Squandered Opportunity.**

With practically a cotton monopoly and allied natural endowments, the south has been like a poker player holding four aces and the joker who lost the game. We had the finest shipbuilding timber in the world, growing down to the ocean's edge, but allowed others to build ships with trees of other lands to haul our products. We lost the earnings of transportation—so we laid down the first ace.

Then, we failed to establish insurance companies and banks that would have kept at home the insurance premiums and interest, where loss drained our country—so we laid down another ace.

We failed to manufacture the basic necessities which we could have produced cheaper than those from whom we bought them—and thus sent away millions needlessly—so we laid down the third ace.

Then, we acquired the habit of buying our foods and feeds to consume, at a price far more than it cost to produce them, and in doing so sent more of our money outward bound on a one-way street, never to return—thus we laid down the fourth ace.

When the showdown came, our joker lost the jackpot.

Let us see what Venice, located in approximately the same climate as ours without our advantages, once did. Forced for safety to build on land, barren knobs of islands, two miles off the shore, the greatest city-state that ever existed after the fall of Rome, was built. It mastered the commerce of Europe.

The "Doges" established a bank called the Bank of Venice that lasted 600 years. Credit on its books was always worth a premium. So powerful was the commercial prestige of Venice that the government required transfers made there on the books of the bank (which was the state institution) be made in person by transferor and transferee, or their respective personal representatives in person. This, in the days of bandits on land and pirates on sea, made it necessary for the ships to go to Venice.

It was the New York Exchange, plus, of that age. Credit on the books of the Bank of Venice was the one sound money of Europe.

When Napoleon captured Venice in 1797, and looted the Bank of Venice, he found only the assets it had held for more than a century, namely, ledgers, ink bottles, and office desks. It was the credit of a great state and not actually money that had mastered European trade. If we could mobilize the credit resources of the southern states and emulate as far as conditions would permit, the examples of the "Doges" of the middle ages, a new center of international trade would come into being.

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## AN AFFLICTION TO THE SOUTH

North Carolina farmers received $353,445,000 for their 12 major crops produced in 1934 and by reason of that improved income, that State ascended to third place in the nation for the value of its agricultural crops.

Only Texas and California went before it.

The three major money crops were tobacco, corn and cotton in that order.

Tobacco producers of the State received $116,000,000 for that product.

Their corn was worth $38,500,000 and cotton was valued at $37,600,000.

Other ranking crops in 1934, in order of the amount they brought producers were: Tame hay, $12,293,736; peanuts, $8,169,992; Irish potatoes, $6,746,006, sweet potatoes, $6,617,450; wheat, $5,794,287; oats, $3,607,250; soybeans, $3,349,271; cowpeas, $2,557,199, and rye, $985,576.

The Charlotte Observer expects the returns for 1935 to equal those for 1934 notwithstanding reduced production. Better prices make up the difference.

Thus North Carolina steps rapidly ahead, being now, as for many years before, one of the most progressive States in the Union.

There is only one great obstacle ahead of the State, according to The Observer, of which more anon. In its account of the reasons for North Carolina's progress in agriculture. The Observer says:

> Looking into the future, the estimated total production in North Carolina of a majority of the leading crops will be below that of 1934, but if prices continue the improvement manifested in 1934, the State's total farm income should be virtually as much, if not more, than in 1934.
>
> While the farms of the State were producing this increased income for the planters during the past year, other activities were being undertaken which may not show up in the statistics of improvement, but which, none the less, will make for a far more independent type of agriculture in the State.
>
> The reduction in acreage for the two major money crops, tobacco and cotton, released for other production lands that had formerly been allocated to these paramount cultures and upon such lands the farmers have diversified their attentions, planting more crops that would bring them returns of an indirect nature, feeds for their livestock and food for themselves.
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> This departure had been nibbled at before the acreage reduction and control campaign of the National Government was instituted.
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> The Live-at-Home program which was inaugurated during the reign of Governor Gardner had started the farmers of Eastern North Carolina especially itno diversified activities, so that when the new Federal control plan was announced for their two major crops of cotton and tobacco, our agriculturalists were already set to use the lands thus released for other profitable ends.
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> If some vital answer could be now found for the problem of widespread and vicious tenantry in the State, the remaining obstacle to the State's climb to the top of the agricultural procession in the entire nation would be removed.

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Solution of the tenant problem in the South would provide 2,000,000 human beings with a buying power that they do not now have.

There is, to be sure, no ready solution. For one thing these tenants have no credit standing. They are entirely without visible resources. All that they have is man power.

For another thing a great many of them would not be capable of directing themselves and their affairs successfully even if they were provided with the credits to buy and equip small farms. These were enslaved by nature, not by an economic system. Some men were born to labor without owning.

But we do not believe that this is true of the majority of tenants, white or black. The truth is there is no way of knowing how effective they would be as independent operators until they are given a fair chance.

As matters stand only a fractional part of this tenant army could possibly buy and equip a farm by means of private credit. They must be made wards of the Federal government through the years of their economic adolescence. They would require not only government loans, but government supervision and business discipline.

Senator Bankhead of Alabama has put his mind and energies to work on this vast human and economic problem. He is sponsoring a bill providing a vast fund to finance such tenants as have the will and intelligence to fight their way out of degradation and hopelessness.

Introduction of this bill was the signal for a fresh outbreak of enlightened discussion of this problem.

Books have been written about farm tenantry in the South; the magazines are printing thoughtful articles about it, but best of all the popular press, that is the newspaper press, of the Southern States, has opened its batteries.

Today we do not know of a single representative Southern newspaper that has not treated this subject sympathetically and objectively. Leaders in other fields, agriculture, business and industry, have spoken and written of tenantry, and done so feelingly and understandingly.

Accordingly the best thought of the South is being directed to this evil—this evil that grew up naturally and inevitably, this evil for which no man and no group is culpable.

We have always known that tenantry as it exists in the South is an evil, but not until recent years have we admitted that anything could be done about it.

Now it is admitted that something can be done about it, at least it is admitted that the South cannot afford longer to evade the question and dismiss it lightly.

If we can successfully refinance loans on mortgaged homes—and we have done it—if we can successfully finance the rehabilitation of distressed people on the land, and we are attempting that, why cannot we finance ambitious tenants who desire to own and improve their own land?

The buying power of these 2,000,000 landless farmers and workers today is negligible, and because it is negligible the whole South suffers economically, socially and politically.

Here is a challenging progrem. It is worthy the best thought and the active sympathies of all our people. Farm tenantry is a great affliction to this Southern country. and so to the nation.

# COTTON SCHEDULE BEATEN IN SOVIETS

### Central Asian Republics Fill Quota of 1,500,000 Tons by Nov. 25.

### NO EXPORTING IS LIKELY

### Despite Bumper Crop, Buying From United States Rises— Harvest Problems Solved.

Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

MOSCOW, Nov. 26.—The Central Asia Soviet Republics have for the first time filled their cotton quotas ahead of schedule by delivering 1,500,000 tons to the State warehouse by Nov. 25.

What effect this will have on the world cotton market is problematical today, although it is said here there will be little or Russian export. However, should cotton prices soar on the world exchange as a result of the Italo-Ethiopian war and the United States' restrictions, the Soviet Republics certainly will have half a million tons or more to throw into the market.

Although the crop is by far the largest ever produced in Russia, prewar production being less than 500,000 tons, the Soviets can make use of it all. Cotton is needed not only in textile mills but in explosives factories and medical supplies plants.

**Rewards For Workers.**

Then too, in keeping with the tremendous drive to fulfill the second five-year plan in four years, the government's policy is to encourage workers by raising the living standard, or, to quote President Mikhael Kalinin, "to make the Soviet people the most beautiful and best dressed in the world."

Not only are the Soviets today not selling their own cotton, but they are increasing purchases from abroad. On the heels of the Soviet-American trade agreement of last July, Soviet cotton purchases from the United States took a leap upward, reaching more than $9,000,000, about 26,000 tons short staple cotton being bought during the first nine months of this year, as compared with $6,000,000 for the whole of last year.

Last year's cotton quota of 1,565,000 tons was not filled by a wide margin. The realization of this year's plan, which was more modest than last year's actually means a 30 per cent increase over 1934.

Cotton has been the Soviets' most difficult crop to bring in, with plantations located in far-off Middle Asia, where the population is still swayed by medieval religious practices and feudal customs. The problem has been not to grow but to harvest the cotton, for the East-fields, as well as sporadic arrests of counter-revolutionary elements who tried to interfere with the harvest, in general the struggle against the Kulaks had been less intense than ever before.

Several factors have entered into this year's successful harvesting of the cotton crop. The government's bank have been made at half the previous interest rate. Above the normal yield, which averages being quotas. Plantations have been widely mechanized, and irrigation systems have been extended.

Money advances from the State

**Troublemakers Executed.**

Although this year saw the trial campaign has ranged from the cir- and execution of the "prophet," cus stunt of bringing costumed Pir Ishan, who, with a group of his Turkmenian horsemen across the tween one-third and country to Moscow, carrying word

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Introduction of this bill was the signal for a fresh outbreak of enlightened discussion of this problem.

Books have been written about farm tenantry in the South; the magazines are printing thoughtful articles about it, but best of all the popular press, that is the newspaper press, of the Southern States, has opened its batteries.

Today we do not know of a single representative Southern newspaper that has not treated this subject sympathetically and objectively. Leaders in other fields, agriculture, business and industry, have spoken and written of tenantry, and done so feelingly and understandingly.

Accordingly the best thought of the South is being directed to this evil—this evil that grew up naturally and inevitably, this evil for which no man and no group is culpable.

We have always known that tenantry as it exists in the South is an evil, but not until recent years have we admitted that anything could be done about it.

Now it is admitted that something can be done about it, at least it is admitted that the South cannot afford longer to evade the question and dismiss it lightly.

If we can successfully refinance loans on mortgaged homes—and we have done it—if we can successfully finance the rehabilitation of distressed people on the land, and we are attempting that, why cannot we finance ambitious tenants who desire to own and improve their own land?

The buying power of these 2,000,000 landless farmers and workers today is negligible, and because it is negligible the whole South suffers economically, socially and politically.

Here is a challenging progrem. It is worthy the best thought and the active sympathies of all our people. Farm tenantry is a great affliction to this Southern country, and so to the nation.

# COTTON SCHEDULE BEATEN IN SOVIETS

### Central Asian Republics Fill Quota of 1,500,000 Tons by Nov. 25.

### NO EXPORTING IS LIKELY

### Despite Bumper Crop, Buying From United States Rises—Harvest Problems Solved.

Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

MOSCOW, Nov. 26.—The Central Asia Soviet Republics have for the first time filled their cotton quotas ahead of schedule by delivering 1,500,000 tons to the State warehouse by Nov. 25.

What effect this will have on the world cotton market is problematical today, although it is said here there will be little or Russian export. However, should cotton prices soar on the world exchange as a result of the Italo-Ethiopian war and the United States' restrictions, the Soviet Republics certainly will have half a million tons or more to throw into the market.

Although the crop is by far the largest ever produced in Russia, prewar production being less than 500,000 tons, the Soviets can make use of it all. Cotton is needed not only in textile mills but in explosives factories and medical supplies plants.

**Rewards For Workers.**

Then too, in keeping with the tremendous drive to fulfill the second five-year plan in four years, the government's policy is to encourage workers by raising the living standard, or, to quote President Mikhael Kalinin, "to make the Soviet people the most beautiful and best dressed in the world."

Not only are the Soviets today not selling their own cotton, but they are increasing purchases from abroad. On the heels of the Soviet-American trade agreement of last July, Soviet cotton purchases from the United States took a leap upward, reaching more than $9,000,000, about 26,000 tons short staple cotton being bought during the first nine months of this year, as compared with $6,000,000 for the whole of last year.

Last year's cotton quota of 1,565,000 tons was not filled by a wide margin. The realization of this year's plan, which was more modest than last year's actually means a 30 per cent increase over 1934.

Cotton has been the Soviets' most difficult crop to bring in, with plantations located in far-off Middle Asia, where the population is still swayed by medieval religious

fulfillment of the cotton per acre, crops have been paid for the inauguration of a newat prices ranging from 50 to 200 per of payment for pickers, giv-cent above the usual price. As a m cash instead of grain andresult, according to Pravda, collecommodities. tive farms in some areas will have dditional incentive has been incomes as high as 2,000,000 rubles. tributing of premiums for aNinety per cent of the Central Asian ield per acre and for exceed-cotton growers are members of otas. Plantations have been State and collective farms. mechanized, and irrigation s have been extended. ey advances from the State have been made at half the us interest rate. Above the al yield, which averages be- one-third and one-half ton

**Troublemakers Executed.**

Although this year saw the trial campaign has ranged from the cir- previous in- cotton crop. The government's bank have and execution of the "prophet," cus stunt of bringing costumed normal yie Pir Ishan, who, with a group of his Turkmenian horsemen across the tween one country to Moscow, carrying word

# Buying Farms

BY GEORGE MORRIS

Convinced that the sharecropping system is all wrong, Comrade Tugwell of the Department of Agriculture proposes to conduct an experiment.

He is going to select 1,000 of the most likely tenants, white and colored, and instruct them how to buy farms of their own and become independent.

A law passed by the recent Congress makes provision for the experiment. Under the law any tenant may have the purchase of a farm financed by the government and pay for it over a period of 40 years. If the farm is not paid for at the end of that time it is probable that arrangements might be made to extend the loan. That, of course, is a contingency so remote that it is of no immediate concern.

We do not want to disillusion Comrade Tugwell, but the thing he proposes has been going on in the south for a hundred years. Some of the large landowners began as tenants. Some of the owners of modest farms, who are at present enjoying the independence that comes of individual initiative, are among our best citizens and are enjoying the fruits of their labor.

In all probability more than 1,000 tenants each year decide to do for themselves what Comrade Tugwell proposes to do for them. Tenants are constantly becoming owners of farms, just as renters in the city become homeowners and small shops become large stores. On the other hand there is a considerable record of farmers losing their farms, of homeowners losing their homes and of merchants going broke. Something depends upon the individual and more upon conditions over which the individual has no control.

Ownership of farms is constantly changing. Tenants buy farms and pay for them or hand them back to the original owners. Land values are so low that it is no trick to buy a farm and terms are so reasonable that only the will is required to complete the transaction.

The trouble with Mr. Tugwell is that he does not understand the operation of farms. The thing that prevents more persons from owning farms is not the trouble in finding a good farm for sale cheap, but the difficulty of financing it after it has been purchased.

The tenant has none of the worries of the farm owner, and the reason there are so many tenants is that most of them are not looking for trouble. Buying a farm is only the first step in owning and operating a farm. The most important thing is being able to finance the operation of a farm. Under the government plan, or any other plan, the tenant cannot mortgage the farm until it is paid for. In effect, it is not his, insofar as he is able to obtain credit, until he pays for it and the mortgage is released.

The tenant upon buying a farm with nothing down and 40 years in which to pay the balance, must next obtain live stock with which to work the crop. That is not an easy matter with the price of mules ranging from $125 to $250 each. The life of a mule in the care and keeping of a tenant is not for long, and he probably would not shower much more attention on it if he should, by some miracle, be able to buy one on credit. But assuming that someone should sell him a mule on credit, with the hope of being paid for it or getting the mule back, there is the question of feeding the work stock. There is another question of credit. Assuming that someone is willing to advance the cost of buying feed for the mule, his troubles still are not solved.

The biggest item in the operation of a farm is supplying food for the tenants, or for those who own and operate a farm. The farm and the mule are mortgaged and the government has first call on the proceeds of the crop for payment on the note and interest. The purchaser of a farm, under Mr. Tugwell's plan, has nothing to pledge to the merchant for furnishing him during the season of cultivating and gathering the crop. The situation appears rather hopeless under the government plan.

The normal development of the tenant into a farm owner is a process of evolution. The tenant saves something from the proceeds of a series of crops. He decides to rent. He has money with which to pay for his live stock and implements. The crop is pledged to pay rent and the live stock is pledged for food and feedstuff upon which the crop is produced. The renter meets his obligations, and, having something left over, decides to buy a farm. He has the live stock and implements and cash with which to make the initial payment. If he is thrifty and luck is with him, he eventually pays for and owns his farm, and in some instances the adjoining farm. The government plan is the exact reverse. The tenant is expected to first buy his farm, in anticipation that all these other things will be added unto him, which they rarely are. The plan is unworkable and economically unsound, unless the custom that has been followed successfully by those who have employed it through all the years nas been on the wrong track. It is not likely that any system universally employed is the wrong way. In approaching the problem of encouraging farm ownership, something the south needs badly, the question of operating capital, or its equivalent, credit, cannot be omitted.

# U. S. Statistics Fail To Hide Increase In Farm Evictions

Daily Worker

WASHINGTON, Nov. 19 (FP).—Farm foreclosures are on the increase again, despite misleading talk by government officials about this year showing a 7 per cent drop. Their estimate is based on U. S. Department of Agriculture figures which cover only up to March 15 of this year.

Farm economists who have made independent surveys point to reports of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, which show a definite increase in farm foreclosures in the first half of 1935 and to confidential reports of the Farm Credit Administration showing that new foreclosure actions by the 12 federal land banks this year are from 100 per cent to 110 per cent higher than in 1934.

Foreclosures pending are more than 130 per cent higher this year than last, and the number of completed foreclosures is nearing 1932-33 levels, according to these same experts.

Figures of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, covering about half the country, show an increase in real estate foreclosures in the first seven months of 1935, making the total 71 per cent higher than for the same period of 1926, 2 per cent higher as compared to 1932 and 8 per cent higher than in the first seven months of 1934.

TOPEKA, KANS.
CAPITAL

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## Negroes as Farmers.

Will the Negro eventually find his greatest opportunity on the farm? The Springfield Republican, friend of the Negro race, thinks so and gives some facts gleaned from census reports to back up its belief.

Negro farm operators constitute 14 per cent of all farm operators in the United States the Republican finds, while the Negro population is considerably less. The Negroes operate only 3.8 per cent of all farm lands, the average Negro farm being of 42.6 acres, compared with a 176-acre average for the white operator; but even 42.6 acres is a good deal of a farm, as many people in New England, including not a few who have lived well on the farm, can testify. Much, of course, depends upon such factors as the nature of the soil, the distance from the market, the choice of crops and the skill of the farmer both as producer and as dealer. In many of these matters the Negro farmer is at a disadvantage compared with the white farmer; but racial discrimination is not the handicap that it is in many other situations in which the Negro is placed. The Negro takes kindly to the soil, and it may be that some of these days he will be raising most of our foodstuffs.

General

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# Corporations in Cotton

ONE OF the principal characteristics of the South, and of Southerners, is a resentment toward outside criticism. This has been explained, by various writers attempting to psychoanalyze the section, as part of an inferiority complex produced by the Civil War. Southerners, however, with less subtle but equally sensible reasoning, say that the problems of the South are so complex, so peculiarly regional, that only a person living in the South can understand them—which makes outside comment irrelevant as well as unwanted.

An example of the way these two points of view sometimes conflict with each other is the present controversy over the sharecroppers, the center of the disturbance being in Arkansas, where thousands of tenant farmers, as a result of the crop-limitation program, have been turned loose to wander along the roads. Northern opinion is mistaken if it believes that the South took no cognizance of the situation and did not try to meet its emergencies. Even before the crop-limitation program went into effect, various Southern newspapers pointed out that it would lead to the dispossessing of many croppers and suggested that steps be taken to meet the crisis before it arose. And, when the movement to unionize the tenants began, it was greeted with enthusiasm in many places.

However, once "outsiders" had come into Arkansas, and "outside" pressure had been brought to bear, the South stiffened its backbone. A Southern institution was being threatened and, with its old impulse, the South rallied to its defense. Violence began. Certain groups, motivated by more than Confederate patriotism, began to terrorize the croppers who had joined the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union and those who, like Norman Thomas and President Lucien Koch of Commonwealth College, were helping the tenants to organize. In August, a Negro organizer was arrested and beaten and a white man forced to leave the state. On November 14, four more organizers were arrested as a prelude to the apprehension and

ill, has the dilemma of the so-called liberal judge been fully appreciated? He has the option of appearing technical and arbitrary to those whose general attitude towards life he shares or of indulging in verbal hair-splitting savoring of intellectual sharp practices, to put it mildly. Is it after all so strange to have a Brandeis the spokesman for the unanimous court in declaring the Frazier-Lemke farm-mortgage moratorium invalid? In the recent N.R.A. decision, Mr. Justice Cardozo, speaking for himself and Mr. Justice Stone, in attempting to satisfy the doctrinal requirement of a standard to which the President must conform to avoid the vice of improper delegation of legislative power to him, refers to the difficulty of reading meaning into the broad generalities of the Act. And the Chief Justice stresses the same point. What, after all, can

The sharecropper system of agriculture did not, as is generally supposed, supplant the old plantations after the Civil War. The South became a region of small farmers—not so completely as New England is, but to a marked degree in comparison with the system prevailing before. The cropper plan, it is true, also began to develop but it did not become firmly established until taxes, mortgages and a chaotic cotton market forced the little farmer to surrender his holdings, which were purchased by wealthier farmers or, especially, by combines of outside capitalists—not Southern capitalists but persons from the North and East.

A correspondent for The New York Times, writing of the Arkansas situation, included in one of his dispatches the following tabulation of acreage cultivated by the four largest "planters" in Poinsett County:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Chapman-Dewey Company | 17,000 | acres |
| Poinsett Lumber Company | 5,550 | " |
| E. Ritter and Company | 5,000 | " |
| Hiram Norcross Plantation | 5,000 | " |

Not one of these, as their names indicate, comes within the old Southern definition of "plantation owner." They are industrial corporations, in the sense in which the phrase is generally understood, and they are in the South for one purpose only—to make money. They have contributed as much to Southern life and culture as has Mr. Morgan or Mr. Mellon. The plantation system has become, to a great extent, a system of absentee ownership. For example, the Poinsett Lumber Company, named in the table above, is a subsidiary of the Singer Sewing Machine Corporation. It seems highly illogical, therefore, for Southerners to maintain that they are defending Southern institutions against "outsiders" when they are actually defending the "outsiders" themselves—unless the Singer Sewing Machine Corporation can be called a Southern institution. One should be more circumspect when taking a stand. The South, more than any other part of the nation, is faced with a number of problems that must be solved. They can best be solved by the South itself—if the South so wills.

# States West of Mississippi River Now Lead in Production of Cotton

## Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas Are Planting More Cotton Than All the States in Eastern Belt.

By HARVIE JORDAN.

The month of August is generally the period of "laying by" field crops and farmers usually take a rest from the arduous, energetic campaign of labor devoted to cultivation in the preceding spring and summer months.

Under this condition of semi-labor with more hours of rest and recreation it is a good time to give thought to an analysis of the cotton growing industry as affecting the southeastern cotton states for the past 100 years.

In connection therewith will be shown the rapid advance in cotton culture in the three states of Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas, known as the southwestern cotton states since 1879.

Accurate official data on cotton production compiled by the United States Census Bureau begins with the year 1839. In that year the total production of lint cotton in the United States, confined principally to the states east of the Mississippi river, was 2,064,000 bales of an average weight of 383 pounds per bale.

No cotton was grown in Texas or Oklahoma at that period and only 15,700 bales were produced in Arkansas that year. Georgia produced 427,000 bales, Mississippi 505,000 bales, Alabama 306,000 bales, South Carolina 161,000 bales, North Carolina 136,000 bales, Louisiana 398,000 bales, Tennessee 72,000 bales, Florida 32,000 bales and the balance of 11,300 bales produced in all other states.

From 1850 to 1869 the bales were averaged at 400 pounds each, as the facilities for packing were crude and largely done by handpower.

Between the years 1839 and 1884 the lead in annual production of cotton crops fluctuated between Georgia and Mississippi, with both states planting from two to three million acres a year and averaging around one-third of a bale per acre.

Texas first began planting cotton in 1849 with a yield that year of 58,000 bales, but by 1879 her acreage had increased to 2,200,000 acres and by 1884 to over 3,000,000 acres, thereby establishing her first year of leadership in acreage and production which has since been maintained.

Georgia held her leadership since 1884 as the second largest cotton state to Texas until 1921, when the spread of the boll weevil, with its destructive ravages, very seriously impaired the cotton growing industry in that state for the past 14 years.

The largest cotton acreage ever planted in Georgia and the maximum yield of lint cotton ever produced in the state was in 1911, with a total acreage of 5,505,000 acres which harvested a crop of 2,795,000 bales averaging 500 pounds and with an average acre yield of 254 pounds of lint.

### All Records Broken.

The year of 1911 saw all records of crop yields in lint cotton production broken so far as heavy maximum average acre yields are concerned.

In that year North Carolina planted 1,624,00 acres and produced 1,126,000 bales; South Carolina planted 2,800,000 acres and harvested 1,692,000 bales, and Alabama with an acreage of 4,107,000 acres planted produced 1,695,000 bales. Texas with 11,000,000 acres planted harvested 4,107,000 bales. The other states did equally as well.

The records show that North Carolina farmers have annually produced the largest yields of lint cotton per acre planted, while Texas farmers each year harvest the smallest acre yield of lint.

The unauthorized statements so often made by people not posted, that cotton farmers in the old southeastern

cotton states cannot successfully compete with Texas and Oklahoma cotton growers are not borne out by the facts when applied to the average acre yields of the staple in the two sections.

**Southwest Marching Ahead.**

Oklahoma farmers first turned their attention to growing cotton on a limited acreage in 1879, producing 17,000 bales that year, but by 1904 were planting 1,500,000 acres in cotton and producing 800,000 bales.

Within the past 30 years the expansion in cotton acreage and production in the southwestern states of Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas has gone forward by leaps and bounds.

In 1926 Texas alone planted 18,374,000 acres in cotton, while all of the eight cotton states east of the Mississippi river planted a combined acreage of only 19,228,000 acres.

The largest cotton acreage ever planted in the United States was in 1926, which amounted to 47,087,000 acres, of which the three southwestern states planted 26,840,000 acres and all of the old cotton states east of the Mississippi river planted 19,228,000 acres.

The total yield of lint cotton that year was 17,555,000 bales, making the maximum yield ever produced in this country in any one year. The far western states are not included in these estimates on the acreage planted.

Since 1920 after the spread of the cotton boll weevil over the eastern cotton states the Texas farmers have annually produced about one-third of the total cotton production each year in the United States.

As the cotton planting area in the southeastern states began to decline after 1920 on account of boll weevil invasion the area of cotton acreage expansion has steadily increased in the southwestern states.

**Old States Decreasing.**

To show the steady annual decrease in cotton acreage in the southeastern states since 1920 to 1935, the following comparative statistical data are presented:

North Carolina planted in 1920 1,587,000 acres and in 1934 977,000 acres; South Caroliina 1920, 2,904,000 acres and in 1934 1,286,000 acres; Georgia 1920, 4,900,000 acres and in 1934 2,141,000 acres; Alabama 1920, 2,858,000 acres and in 1934 2,215,000 acres.

It will be noted that in the last 15 years Georgia farmers have decreased their cotton acreage about 56 per cent from 1920; North Carolina within that period has decreased her acreage approximately 38 per cent, and South Carolina had made a decrease of about 56 per cent, equal to that of Georgia.

The Georgia and South Carolina farmers stand at the head as leaders in cotton acreage reduction since 1920, with North Carolina third, and the other states, including Alabama, making only slight decreases, with Texas planting about the same area in 1934,, 11,000,000 acres, which she planted in 1920, although it must be said to the credit of Texas that the cotton acreage in that state last year was 7,340,000 acres less than she planted in 1926, as already shown above.

As final comparative statistics showing the cotton acreage of the three southwestern states with that of the eight cotton states east of the Mississippi river for the year 1934, the following figures from the United States Census Bureau are presented:

Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas, three southwestern states, planted in 1934 an area of 15,859,000 acres in cotton. For the same year the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Tennessee planted 11,340,000 acres, or 4,519,000 acres less than the combined total of the three southwestern states.

It is quite clear, therefore, that expansion of the cotton growing area has rapidly shifted to the states west of the Mississippi river, while the southeastern cotton states have been steadily falling back to the areas planted in cotton in 1879. The cotton acreage now planted in Georgia, the Carolinas and Alabama is approximately the same acreage planted in 1879, 56 years ago.

## COTTON IN LATIN AMERICA

The serious nature of the threat to American domination of world cotton markets as a result of the increased production of the fleecy staple in South America is emphasized in the movement now under way to transplant large numbers of Oklahoma farmers to the Argentine Chaco territory.

Already Brazilian production has jumped from less than a hundred thousand bales a few years ago to a half million bales in 1934 with the prospect of a still greater increase during the 1935 season, and Paraguay is also rapidly increasing its acreage in cotton.

In announcing that he will come to the United States in the near future, Governor Castells, of the Argentine Chaco, points out that there are seven million acres of good cotton land awaiting colonization in that region, and that Argentine production costs are the lowest in the world, even lower than Brazil.

Argentina's production only a few years ago was negligible but this year the crop will be in the neighborhood of 250,000 bales, while Paraguay is laying plans to materially increase its recent average of 40,000 bales a year.

Brazil claims to have 2,000,000,000 acres suitable for cotton production which need only be cleared of their present jungle growth to produce upwards of a bale to the acre without the use of fertilizer.

Governor Castells announces that grants of land amounting to 120 acres will be made to each American cotton growing family who will come to the Argentine and that if the first group to be transferred is successful and contented a program of steady immigration will be launched with the ultimate object of placing every acre of cotton land in the Chaco region under cultivation.

That the scheme is not an idle pipe dream is attested by the statement of former Governor William H. Murray, of Oklahoma, who has spent much time in South America, that "the Argentine Chaco region will grow cotton and if they take people who decide they are going down there and make good regardless of the type of country they live in, the colony will succeed."

Paul Sanders, able commentator on Latin-American affairs, points out in a recent article that the campaigns in Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay to increase cotton production "derive primarily from the cotton restriction program in the United States and lower South American production costs."

With American cotton pegged at 12 cents a pound and the staple growing in other countries bringing from 8 to 9 cents on the Liverpool and other great foreign markets, a premium is placed on foreign grown cotton that is certain to end American domination unless the disparity in prices is brought to an end.

At no time in the history of the American cotton industry has it faced a more serious problem. What the solution will be is still to be determined, but it must be found before long if the ranking position of cotton in American economics is to be preserved.

# The Tragic Fate of American Cotton

By WALTER PARKER
Noted Southern Cotton Expert.

World consumption of all kinds of cotton—before the Farm Board began:

| | 1928-29 |
|---|---|
| From the United States | 15,256,000 |
| From foreign | 10,626,000 |
| Total | 25,882,000 |

During Farm Board Operations:

| | 1929-30 | 1930-31 |
|---|---|---|
| From the United States | 13,108,000 | 11,045,000 |
| From foreign | 12,101,000 | 11,438,000 |
| Total | 25,209,000 | 22,483,000 |

World consumption after the Farm Board, (a), and during the AAA, (b) and (c):

| | (a) 1932-33 | (b) 1933-34 | (c) 1934-35 |
|---|---|---|---|
| From the United States | 14,405,000 | 13,680,000 | 11,314,000 |
| From foreign | 10,347,000 | 11,792,000 | 14,150,000 |
| Totals | 24,752,000 | 25,472,000 | 25,464,000 |

| Maximum consumption of United States cotton. | Total world consumption. |
|---|---|
| 1926-27 15,748,000 | 25,580,000 |
| 1927-28 15,576,000 | 25,408,000 |
| 1928-29 15,256,000 | 25,882,000 |

World consumption of cotton is now almost as great as in 1926-27 and 1927-28, and almost as large as in 1928-29.

But world consumption of foreign grown cotton is now some 3,524,000 bales greater than world consumption of foreign grown cotton was in 1928-29, while world consumption of United States grown cotton is now 3,942,000 bales less than it was in 1928-29—the last season of entirely free markets for United States grown cotton.

Because of the bankruptcy of the Farm Board in 1932-33, the market for United States cotton enjoyed a temporary period of freedom, and promptly showed signs of revival, only to again lose prestige in the world market under the AAA above-value loans.

A striking difference in the situation is found in the fact that prior to 1920-30, the raw cotton industry of the United States was the dominant factor in the world's cotton markets, whereas now the United States government holds a very large surplus while foreign producers have sold out to consumers.

Foreign cotton producers have not registered a protest against this change in the United States situation, and are not likely to register a protest.

# WALLER WRITES ON WORK AMONG MISSOURI AND ILLINOIS FARMERS

By C. H. WALLER
Field Representative of Cotton Division of the AAA

(Note: In the statement below written exclusively for THE INFORMER, Prof. C. H. Waller, state leader of the Negro extension forces of Texas, who has been loaned to the AAA for special work among Negro farmers of Missouri and Illinois, tells about his new work. Profit Waller is located at Cape Girardeau Mo., and will be there for about 90 days.)

TO THE INFORMER:

I am here in Southern Missouri and Southern Illinois to do what I can to adjust whatever I can in regards to tenants and share-croppers. The department at Washington is trying in every way possible to see that the poor down will get just what is due him from Washington. Mine is a delicate job and one hard to adjust but I have this assurance that the force at College Station told Mr. Cully Cobb the director of the cotton section if Waller could not do it there was not a man in the United States that could. I am not trying to get any lowers for myself; but all that might be said of the Extension work in Texas is due very largely to the very fine relations that we have at College Station Texas and to the most excellent work done by the agents in Texas and the very fine group of land-owners we have in Texas that we are working with.

I am here for sixty or ninty days and then I will move back into the state for the continuance of my work. My whole plan in the work in Texas is to make each agent feel that he or she is carrying his or her part. No big boss and no dribbling but as the name implies co-operative work.

My great handicap in this field is for some psuedo professor of economies i nsome of our colleges to go out in a county, make a hasty survey of three days in a county and then go back and write a long treatise on the subject when I have had agents in the county for the past ten years and know every nook in the county and the treatment they have received.

Ask the question how many of them have ever had tenants? How many own a farm? How will a tenant treat a landlord? We are too proud to give the underdog the best of every opinion.

We have two such men in this section trying to learn the real truth and to put it where it will do the greatest amount of good.

Agriculture -1935

Condition of.

General.

# The Farmer's Problem

BY GEORGE MORRIS

Despite all desires to the contrary, it is difficult to escape the reluctant conclusion that if the south is to continue to depend upon cotton as its money crop, the margin of profitness must be between a moderate price and low cost of production.

We are entering the third year of controlled production and peggedment of price. The price of last year's crop is dependent upon the government's assurance that this year's loans will not be less than last. There can be no doubt about the effectiveness of reduced production and 12 cent loans as an artificial method of serving a temporary emergency. But persisted in too long, stimulants become habit forming.

When consumption follows production on the downward grade, there is no doubt about the direction in which the industry is headed. Everyone is familiar with what happened to our foreign markets. During the last six months the consumption of American cotton fell off a million bales, while consumption of growth from other countries increased by approximately the same amount.

But all American losses have not gone to other cotton growing countries. Germany, England and Italy not only have perfected synthetic fibers, a constituent of which is about 40 per cent low grade cotton, but apparently those countries have finally achieved success in utilizing cotton machinery in the manufacture of goods from fibers.

There has never been any difficulty about developing substitutes. That was comparatively easy. The greater obstacle was the necessity for installing new and expensive machinery, which would become obsolete the moment the price of cotton fell below the cost of synthetic fibers, and necessitating return to cotton machinery.

Now that this difficulty has been overcome, the cotton industry is confronted with the possibility of the mills turning from one fiber to another as the price fluctuates. It places cotton in the dangerous category of nonessentials, whereas we have always consoled ourselves with the thought that the world must have cotton and that there was nowhere else to get it. We are now faced with the dual handicap of other countries producing 60 per cent of the world supply of cotton against our 40 per cent, and also the synthetic fibers, which make the mills independent, in a measure, of cotton from any source.

Despite what happened to consumption of American cotton abroad, there were some who comforted themselves with the thought that, at least, we still had domestic mills. If we lost our export business, they argued, the farmer would still be better off by limiting production to the requirements of domestic consumption, at a fixed price, guaranteed by the government, and the producer paid for the reduction out of the processing tax.

The argument was sound as far as it went, but it failed to take into account that science is no less advanced in America than it is in other countries. It is traditional that when the price of any commodity gets too high a substitute is always made available. We saw our cotton crop reduced 21 per cent in 1934 under 1933, while the production of rayon, composed of 60 per cent wood pulp, increased.

The price of cotton goods, due to fixed price and added processing tax on the manufacturer, reached almost the level of woolens, due to the fact that there is no processing tax on wool. The sheep herders of the west find a ready demand on the part of the consumer for their products at a high price, while the cotton grower, obtaining a fair loan on his production, witnesses a dwindling market and cotton mills complain of being overbuilt, with many of them working one-third capacity.

In other words, we have confronting the cotton producer in the domestic market almost the identical problem confronting him in the foreign market. It means that there is no assurance for the cotton producer anywhere, at home or abroad, unless he can meet not only the price of foreign growths but also synthetic fibers. On the other hand, memory would be short indeed if we did not keep in mind the disaster that overtook the cotton farmer as a result of excessive crops and low prices. There would appear to be not much choice for the farmer between a policy of reduced production and a price so high that there is no demand and one of such excessive production that there is no price.

If there is a solution it probably lies with the farmers instead of the lawmakers. A well-informed farmer tells us that he does not know of any farmer who suffered seriously from the depression if he was out of debt when it began. The same might be said of almost everyone. But the farmer is traditionally in debt. He operates on a credit basis. Cost of production bears no relation to the price of his product. That in itself would suggest the exercise of a little business acumen. The average farmer anticipates a high price, and lives and spends and borrows accordingly. Once in a while he guesses right, but the odds are against him. In the prosperous days of agriculture the farmer produced practically all of his necessities and the income from cotton was surplus. They say that those days have gone with the advent of the more complex civilization. The farmer who realizes that his dependence upon the soil is pretty much what it was in the more primitive days should find no difficulty in being among the first to attain the dreamed of day of "the

## Davis Steals A March

Chester Davis, AAA administrator, has stolen a march on the professional agitators and impractical uplifters by coming down south and touring around over the farming sections where sharecropping and the like are problems. Mr. Davis knows, in the first place, that the faults and defects, whatever they are, lie primarily in the system and that it is the system that needs attack rather than any individuals operating under it. It is, as Mr. Davis says, a labor problem that has been with the south a long time.

Mr. Davis likewise makes a profoundly pertinent observation when he points out that the whole trouble lies in the relative inadequacy of income from southern farming. He states it by saying the south has 51 per cent of all persons on farms and yet receives only about 31 per cent of farm income. That really puts it in a nutshell. The remedy for such a state of affairs must be of an evolutionary nature and at least part of it must come from increasing the degree to which southern farm populations live at home and from the land.

In the meantime, Mr. Davis proposes to handle individual cases on their individual merits where complaint of hardship and injustice arise, and that is eminently fair. Incidentally, Mr. Davis goes back to Washington convinced that "the landowner, on the whole, has lived up to his obligation to keep a normal number of tenants on his farm." It is refreshing to find a government official who will come to see things for himself so that he may work out on the basis of personal knowledge and observation a remedy that will contain consideration for all elements concerned as its chief ingredient.

**Chattanooga, Tenn.**
**TIMES**

MAR 3 1935

## THE INCREASE IN FARM TENANCY.

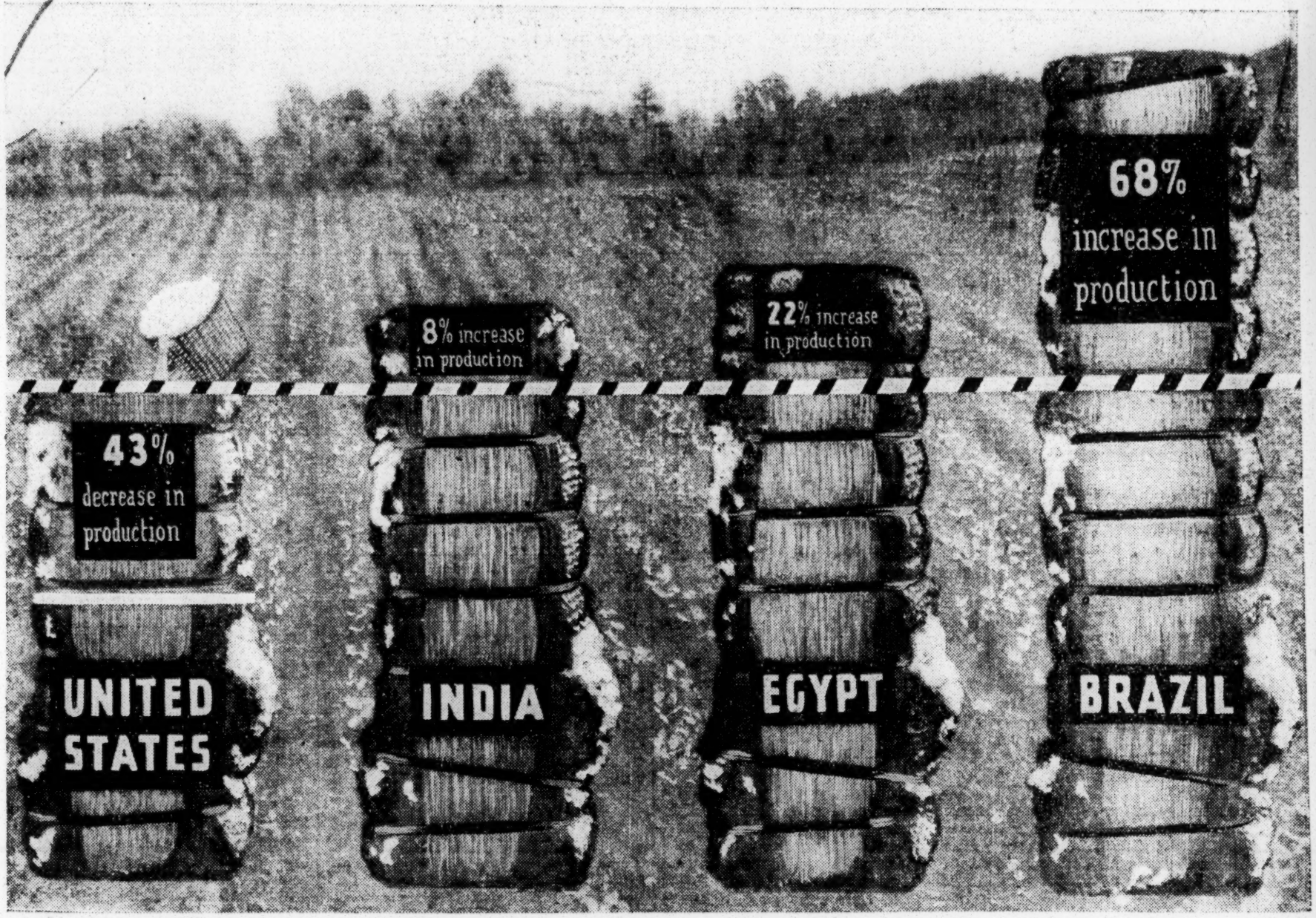
Testifying before a Senate subcommittee recently, Secretary Wallace gave some thought-provoking figures on the subject of the increase in farm tenancy in the United States. "Only two generations ago," he said, "we were at the heights of the homestead movement, which had as one of its fundamental aims the creation of an agriculture made up predominantly of small-farm operators. Today we find that half of our farm lands are operated by tenants and nearly that large a percentage of our farmers rent all the land they farm."

"Some of the worst characteristics of the American tenancy system are found in the South," the Secretary stated, pointing out that the widely held idea that most Southern tenants are Negroes is erroneous. "Of the 1,800,000 tenants and croppers reported in the sixteen Southern States by the 1930 census, only 700,000, or less than 40 per cent., were Negroes." Between 1920 and 1930 there was a tremendous increase in tenancy in the South. The entire gain was due to increase in white tenancy. "In fact, there was a slight decrease in the number of Negro tenants and croppers between 1920 and 1930, but there was a gain of 69 per cent. in the number of white croppers during that decade."

"The disintegration of the farm system in the South, particularly the plantation phase," continued the Secretary, "has become progressively more rapid since the World War." But the South is not alone in having a growing tenant problem. "In North Dakota, for instance, where a large percentage of the land was homesteaded in the latter part of the last century, over 35 per cent. of all farmers in the State are tenants. In Oklahoma, one of the last States to be opened for settlement, about two-thirds of all farms are now operated by tenant farmers." Even about 40 per cent. of the farms on Federal reclamation projects are operated by tenants. And "in some of the best prairie counties of Illinois, for instance, you will find 70 to 80 per cent. of the farms operated by tenants."

This serious and growing tenancy condition has come about, despite the homestead laws of the various States, the laws under which Federal lands were homesteaded and the efforts of the Federal Government in the field of financing farmers. It may be attributed to many things, including the operation of land sharks, high interest rates, low prices for farm products, heavy taxes, unseasonable weather, shiftlessness and lack of ability to manage or make headway in a rather difficult world.

# Half-Billion World Cotton Market At Stake




The picture above printed in the United States News, a Washington weekly newspaper, graphically tells the story of the decline of the United States as a cotton producing nation and the growth of some of its competitors. Under the caption, "King Cotton Totters on His Throne—Half Billion World Market at Stake," the United States News tells the story.

### OTHER NATIONS GAIN OVER U. S.

**Uncle Sam Cuts Production 16 Per Cent In 3 Years**

Our south sharply reduces its output of cotton. World competitors sharply increase theirs.

Foreign buyers cut in half their purchases of American cotton. They step up purchases of Brazilian, Indian, Egyptian and Chinese cotton.

Yet, at large, the cotton south enjoys a burst of good times. Also, it enjoys the longest, most expensive relief rolls in its history.

What is happening? Just this:

Part of the country is engaged in seeking recovery through restriction.

Its farmers in 1933 plowed up 10,000,000 acres of growing cotton for a bounty of $105,000,000. In 1934 they did not plant 5,000,000 acres of cotton in return for a bounty of $135,600,000. Also they obtained from Congress a law limiting the amount of cotton that any farmer can sell free of tax.

Both years they sought and obtained the right to use the nation's credit to peg, first at 10 cents a pound, and then at 12, the price of their commodity.

Result: Prices raised from a ruinous 6 cents to a profitable 12 cents. Money, about $240,000,000 of it, syphoned from pockets of cotton consumers to pockets of cotton producers through processing taxes. Jobs, thousands of them, destroyed by production cuts, with former tenants and sharecroppers going on relief.

Nervous, artificial markets, reflected in the past week's drastic price break. Contraction in use of cotton at home and in markets abroad. But, withal, a pulling down nearer to normal of a once mountainous surplus of raw cotton.

Why, then, worry about foreign markets or foreign competition?

Because, normally, 60 per cent of this country's cotton crop is sold abroad, only 40 per cent consumed at home. A half-billion-dollar market is at stake.

Might it be lost or severely cut down? The pistogram at the top of this page tells that story.

Brazil is enjoying a cotton boom. Egypt is stepping up production. India is doing the same. Latest Russian reports tell of plans to export cotton. For the first time since the Civil War, the United States in 1934 produced less than half of the world's cotton.

**Cotton Tax to Stay**

Cotton is to continue under strict production control. Yet even if no cotton were grown in the south this season there would be enough of this staple on hand to meet all American demands. Only the foreign market would suffer from lack of supplies.

The reason is that the government expects 8,000,000 bales of old-crop cotton to be on hand next fall when the new crop comes in. This country uses only about 6,500,000 bales in a normal year.

Henry A. Wallace, secretary of agriculture, has informed the cotton textile industry that there will be no change in the processing tax on cotton, either toward a higher or toward a lower level, before August.

Without the tax, the AAA program, which has resulted in increased purchasing power for the farmer, would be scuttled, in the opinion of most officials.

The subject of cotton and its future apparently will not down.

This past week it figured in two sessions of Senate debate. There was started in the south a move to revive world trade by adjusting tariffs. Secretary Wallace expressed the opinion that foreign nations seeking lower cotton prices, were back of the move to have this country subsidize exports.

Senator Tydings, Democrat, of Maryland, declared in the Senate:

"Nearly 1,800,000 farmers raise cotton as their principal money crop. If we export half the cotton, it is logical that about 850,000 American farmers rely upon cotton sold outside the United States for their bread and butter.

"If the policy of scarcity shall continue to be followed, if the policy of high-priced cotton shall be maintained 10, 20, 30 or 40 years, until our export cotton trade shall have been absorbed by foreign competitors, 850,000 farmers will have to find another livelihood."

To this, Senator Bankhead, Democrat, Alabama, father of the Bankhead cotton control law, replied that the limitation program was only temporary, that cotton can be produced more cheaply in the United States than elsewhere, and that agriculture, by controlling production, is only doing what industry always has done.

Agriculture—1935

General.

Condition of

# SHARECROPPER PROBE DELAYED BY BAPTISTS

Commercial Appeal

Poteat Urges Bureau of Social Research

3-19-35

## CONDEMN CRIME, MOVIES

Memphis, Tenn.

**Denomination Spurns Federal Funds for Churches—Attacks Liquor—Selects St. Louis for Next Convention**

Application of federal funds to churches, economic injustices and motion pictures which depict vice and crime were deplored by the Southern Baptist Convention yesterday as it deferred action for one year on a proposal to create a bureau of social research.

The convention reaffirmed its condemnation of liquor traffic and declared its "unalterable opposition" to war and lynching.

Attacking the liquor policy of government—federal, state and local—in another resolution, the convention condemned "unjustifiable perversion and prostitution of governmental power."

**Sharp Debates**

Several times during the day the body was thrown into an uproar by sharp differences of opinion among the speakers. Late in the afternoon the convention voted down Memphis and New Orleans in favor of St. Louis for the next annual meeting.

In recommending during the morning session the creation of a bureau of social research, Dr. E. McNeill Poteat, Jr., Raleigh, N. C., urged investigation of southern sharecropper conditions. The recommendation aroused spirited debate.

Later in the afternoon, the convention adopted the report of the powerful social service commission, presented by Dr. Arthur J. Barton, Wilmington, N. C., chairman, containing an amendment expressing "deep concern for social justice for all individuals and groups." The resolutions on liquor, war, lynching and application of public funds to churches were contained in this report.

**Peonage in Texas**

An amendment to the report was introduced by Dr. J. M. Dawson, of Waco, Texas, who made an impassioned plea for its adoption. He said:

"It is reported that in my own state, there are valley farm owners who work their tenants on halves, require them to buy all supplies at exhorbitant prices and charge the legal interest in addition, thus reducing these tenants to virtual peons.

"Some of these men," he added, profess to believe in the true gospel, by which they mean they give mental assent to a creed which assures them of escape from a burning hell after death, but may ignore social justice here and live like the devil."

**Huff Next Keynoter**

Dr. John A. Huff of New Orleans was selected to give the convention sermon at the next annual meeting.

"Political leaders, and in some instances even religious leaders, seem to have lost their way concerning some of the basic principles of Ameriacn life and institutions . . ." Dr. Barton said in making his report.

"Among the surprising and disquieting proposals . . . is that of having the government intervene in the realm of religion by extending financial aid to churches and other religious institutions," the social service commission chairman said.

He named proposals to have the FHA indorse loans up to $2,000 to churches and of giving assistance to clerics from work relief funds.

**Threatens Freedom**

"Whenever the government becomes the sponsor for religion, financial or other, the freedom of religion comes to an end. . . . Baptists have suffered too much from freedom of conscience to be willing to barter their freedom for a mess of financial gain or political pottage," Dr. Barton said as the audience vigorously applauded.

Heated debate was crystallized at the close of the morning session, in which Dr. Poteat hurled charges against the Supreme Court of the

Birmingham, Ala. News

March 24, 1935

## Helping Tenant Farmers To Become Owners Of Land

The idea behind the proposal recently put forward by Senator Bankhead for federal assistance to tenant farmers to enable them to buy land of their own finds the strongest sort of support in a report on the South's agricultural situation, just made public by the Committee on Minority Groups in the Economic Recovery. This report reveals in a most impressive way the necessity for such a program as that advocated by Senator Bankhead. While, so far as appears from summaries of the report, there is no direct endorsement of the Bankhead plan itself, the committee recommends a "far-reaching program of government aid to ownership" as the only remedy for the conditions it found in its study of Southern agriculture. Senator Bankhead's proposal would seem to be right in line with the committee's recommendations.

The study discloses that 71 per cent of the cotton farmers of the South are landless that 58 per cent of the total farm population in this section is in the same condition, and that farm tenancy is steadily increasing. Coupling this situation with the fact that exports of American cotton are declining while cotton production abroad is increasing the committee declares that the South is confronted with "a major economic crisis which demands prompt and vigorous action."

One fact which may be surprising to many Southerers is that the number of white tenants in the South exceeds that of Negro tenants. The study, made under the auspices of the Julius Rosenwald Fund; Dr. W. W. Alexander, of Atlanta, director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, and Dr. Charles S. Johnson, of Fisk University Nashville, was intended primarily to explore the status of Negro agricultural workers. It was found, however, that the farm tenant population of the South includes many more white people than Negroes. As the committee points out, the problem of farm tenancy far transcends its racial aspects, and "menaces the entire economic future of the region."

In 1930 there were 3,088,111 farms in the 13 Southern states. Of this number, 58 per cent, or 1,789,000, were cultivated by tenants, of whom 1,091,000 were white and 698,000 colored. Among cotton farmers, the prevalence of tenancy ran to 71 per cent and in certain Black Belt regions to 80 per cent and upward. Due to the agricultural depression of the 1920s, according to the report, the number of white tenants increased in 10 years by 200,000, through loss of farms and otherwise. The percentage of cotton farm tenancy grew in the same period from 55 to 71 per cent.

The conditions growing out of our appallingly high rate of farm tenancy have been made worse, naturally, by the depression. Measures designed to improve the position of cotton farmers generally have operated in many instances to make the plight of tenant farmers worse. The committee says that the limitation of cotton acreage, the restriction of production, the decline of cotton exports due to tariff barriers, and the increase of cotton production abroad, have "undercut the living of multitudes of tenant farmers wholly dependent upon cotton and have cast others entirely adrift without access to the land or other assured means of support."

There can be no question that the cotton control measures have greatly benefited cotton growers as a whole. But neither is there any question that many tenant farmers and sharecroppers suffered as a result of the act. The federal authorities hope to prevent a repetition of that experience this year.

Meanwhile, however, as the committee's study shows, millions of people who normally should be making their living on the soil have been thrown on relief. Last year, in the 13 Southern states covered by this study, one family in every four was on relief, and the total relief budget was $212,000,000, "with little prospect of improvement unless some means can be found of making these people self-supporting." Even for those so fortunate as to retain their status of tenancy, instead of being set adrift, the report envisions a hopeless, debt-burdened future, "with as meager a diet of fatback corn pone and molasses as can be found in the world's agriculture."

"The plantation," the report says, "is not interested in feeding its tenants with the vegetables, milk, meats and fruits of a beneficent soil and clime; it wants only its cash crop of cotton." And the region "has paid a terrible price" for its concentration of landholdings and its one-crop system, under which "even the large landowners have not uniformly profited." The one-crop system has been the curse of Southern agriculture, and especially of the tenant farmers, who in so many instances have not been able to grow—or who at least have not grown—food crops to help supply their own tables. No doubt this failure to grow sufficient food for home consumption has been largely the fault of the tenant farmers themselves, for a home garden can easily be cultivated on any farm; yet this lack of enterprise does not absolve the system from its share of the blame. The emphasis which has been placed on cotton has led the tenant farmers to think of little else but cotton.

The conclusion of the report is that the South is confronted with a choice between continued crop regimentation, with subsidies for idle lands and relief for displaced tenants and laborers, or a "program of government aid by which multitudes now tenants may become self-supporting landowners, after the example of Ireland, Denmark and other countries." The committee says it is

obvious that the continuance of the present system offers no hope, and that the latter course will be not only far better, but also cheaper in the long run. Calling attention to the peculiar suitability of the South to maintain a prosperous population of home-owners, the report recalls the words of Henry W. Grady: "When every farmer in the South shall eat bread from his own field and meat from his own pasture, then shall be the breaking of the fullness of the day."

Nothing less than a federal program such as that advocated by Senator Bankhead would serve to make any real headway against the grave and growing problem of farm tenancy. Gov. Graves also has advanced an excellent proposal for enabling tenants in this state to become owners of farms. His plan contemplates a $17,000,000 rural rehabilitation program, financed in Alabama by the federal government as a "national experiment," to make home-owners of 10,000 farmers now on relief. The program depends on the approval of Relief Administrator Hopkins, with whom the governor has already conferred on the subject. It will mean a long step forward for Alabama if it is approved.

# AID FOR SHARECROPPER ASKED IN AAA PROGRAM

**Public Hearing on Plans for 1936 Crops Is Brought To Close.**

10-13-35

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Oct. 12.—(AP)—Spokesmen for the cotton belt today added new testimonials to the success of the government's acreage reduction program as a cure for the economic ailments of the cotton producer as the Agricultural Adjustment Administration's public inquiry into southern sentiment was brought to a conclusion.

The cure, however, some witnesses asserted, has not extended to the tenant farmer and sharecropper, labeled by their spokesmen as "the forgotten men" of the New Deal.

As it now operates, said H. C. Nixon, professor of political science at Tulane University, New Orleans, and a planter in Alabama, the AAA program is the "landlord's code."

"The AAA program has increased purchasing power, but it has not been distributed equally among tenants and sharecroppers."

Attacking absentee ownership as the main source of labor difficulties in the south, Professor Nixon said he favored continuance of the AAA program with more benefits to the sharecropper.

"If we degrade any section of the population," he declared, "we put a chain on every section of it. Sharecroppers do pay taxes, because some of mine have gone barefoot so I could pay the taxes."

Spokesmen for the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, who announced yesterday that they would address the hearing in behalf of the sharecroppers of eastern Arkansas, did not put in an appearance today at the hearing. In a statement released yesterday, Walter Moskop, of Trumann, Ark., said he would tell the hearing that "equal benefits" for the sharecropper would be necessary to prevent "continued abuse" by landlords.

Cully A. Cobb, head of the cotton section of the AAA, while not discussing the merits of the plea for the sharecropper, said that he would see that provisions of next year's AAA contracts "are enforced to the letter."

All Cotton Calories —Spa

# ARGENTINA PLANS TO GROW COTTON

**Brazil's Entrance Into World Markets Spurs Interest in Production.**

Constitution 10-6-35

Atlanta, Ga.

BUENOS AIRES, Oct. 5.—(AP)—Argentina is taking Brazil for an example in what can be done in the way of getting a foothold in King Cotton's realm.

Following up a recent order of free seed to northern Argentine cotton growers, the national cotton board has followed up with a circular pointing out what cotton has done for Brazil.

"Until 1934," said the circular, "Brazilian cotton sales abroad amounted to no more than one per cent of all Brazilian exports. Nevertheless, a big increase in cotton production in 1934 placed cotton second only to coffee in Brazil's export list. Cotton accounted for 13 per cent of Brazil's exports in 1934."

The cotton board cited the Brazilian example because development of the Argentine Chaco, principal producer of "white gold" in this country, has a record of only 21 years, and the economic growth of that northern region is still in its beginnings.

The Argentine Chaco now has only 214,160 inhabitants as compared to 42,274 who lived there in 1914. Cotton production has increased rapidly to establish an Argentine record of 250,000 bales this year.

Chaco settlers, many of whom were squatters and took up government land to which the territorial authorities consented to give titles, are beginning to attain a mild prosperity after the struggle of building up their homesteads from scratch. Despite depression, Chaco farmers have increased their savings bank deposits by 25 per cent since 1930.

Governor Jose Castells, of the Chaco territory, several months ago announced a tentative plan to settle a group of Texas cotton farming families in the Chaco, but has given no indication since that the project actually will be carried out.

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# REPORT OF RESOLUTION COMMITTEE ADOPTED

## FARM TENANCY AND SHARE-CROPPING STRESSED

### These Evils Responsible For Debt Slavery, Says Maker of Document

Farm tenancy and the share-cropping system of farming are evils retarding the progress and development of many sections of our country. These evils are responsible for debt-slavery, peonage, poor housing and living conditions and a major portion of all misfortunes suffered by colored farmers and their families. As long as these evils exist so long will colored farmers be deprived of equal opportunities with other American farmers to enjoy the privileges of American citizenship and the rewards of their labor. We shall continue to combat these evils by assisting tenant farmers, share-croppers and farm hands of our Race to become farm owners. We request our national officers to continue giving prospective buyers of farm homes all assistance and information available.

**ACREAGE REDUCTION PROGRAMS**

We favor a continuation of the federal government's plan to reduce cotton acreage. We favor, however revision of the Bankhead cotton control act that small farmers, tenants and share-croppers, who have a base production of three bales or less, be exempted from the restrictions of the act. We favor continuation of the corn-hog reduction program.

The practice of purchasing needed farm and home supplies by cooperative methods should be continued. By purchasing cooperatively, our units are able to obtain the major portion of their needs at, or near wholesale prices. Our units should patronize home merchants if given courteous and fair treatment.

**COOPERATIVE PRODUCTION ANDD MARKETING**

Units are urged to plant enough acreage in crops suitable to their soil and climate will enable them to sell in carlots. Grain, hay and other vegetables, hay, corn, watermelons, peanuts, mixed cars of vegetables and sweet potatoes can be marketed cooperatively by units through our national office.

**LEGAL CONTRACTS FOR RENTERS**

We should continue to protest the actions of landowners and plantation managers who refuse to give tenants and share-croppers legal written contracts, settlement statements, or privilege to raise sufficient food crops for the sustenance of their families. Members are advised to have no dealings with such landlords or plantation managers and our national officers are instructed to assist members so treated in finding favorable locations.

**MODEL FARM COMMUNITIES**

We suggest to the proper federal government authority that at least one model colored farm community be established in each of the southern and border states and in any other state having an appreciable Negro rural or urban population.

**DR. HENRY A. HUNT**

We thank those responsible for the appointment of Dr. Henry A. Hunt to his position in the Farm Credit Administration, which position he has so creditably filled, and whose service has been of incalculable benefit to American colored farmers.

**DIRECT REPRESENTATION**

We request the Agricultural Adjustment Administration to appoint in each county having an appreciable Negro farm population, a committee composed of two colored farm owners and three tenant farmers or share-croppers, to work and cooperate with AAA county committees, boards, bureaus, loca credit corporations, or any other bodies functioning under the AAA to the end that colored farmer may have direct representation o as close representation as is possible in these various bodies. We request that in counties having organized units of the National Federation of Colored Farmers, tha these committees be chosen from our membership.

**FARM AND HOME DEMONSTRATION AGENTS**

We urge that a colored farm extension agent and a colored home demonstration agent be employed in every county or group of adjoining counties having an appreciable Negro farm population, the same to be wholly under the supervision of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. We also request that these agents be instructed to cooperate with our organization and with local units of our organization in counties where organized, as white extension agents cooperate with units of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

**NEGRO AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTIONS**

We request the federal government and all state governments to make ample appropriations for the benefit of Negro agricultural institutions.

**RURAL CREDIT UNIONS**

We favor organization of rural credit unions and assert that such unions should be officered and directed by colored farmers in colored farm communities.

**LAND OWNERSHIP**

We request the federal and state governments to make every effort to widen land ownership by Negroes, both collectively and individually.

**FARMERS' SUNDAY**

All units of our organization and colored rural communities should observe Farmers' Sunday. On this day every effort should be made to increase our membership, to spread the gospel of organization and cooperation.

## 'Croppers, Tenants To Get Exemptions

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25.—(AP)—The house agriculture committee today moved to include tenant farmers and sharecroppers in the two-bale exemption proposed for small cotton farms under the Bankhead control act, after hearing farm administration adjustment officials argue such a policy would destroy the program.

Cully A. Cobb, AAA cotton chief, told the committee the administration thought best to apply the exemption only to small farmers owning their own farms, adding that to include sharecroppers and tenants working on the farms of landlords would complicate administration of the act.

Members of the committee, however, contended sharecroppers and tenants were as much individual farmers as small producers who own their own land and should be entitled to the exemption.

## Aid for the Tenant

Birmingham, Ala.

Figures newly released by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration show the imperative necessity for the enactment of a measure along the lines of Sen. John H. Bankhead's tenant land purchase loan bill.

The AAA now admits that whereas before 1933 cotton income went 40 per cent to the landowners and 60 per cent to the tenants, the reverse ratio now holds true.

Certainly it would be disastrous to the South to prolong a crop reduction system which would force the already impoverished tenant class, comprising a vast majority of the farm population, further into despair. And certainly there is no defense to be made of crop curtailments, paid for in increased prices for city consumers, when the system is socially oppressive.

Senator Bankhead, father of the cotton acreage reduction program, seeks to iron out these inequities by providing Federal funds up to a billion dollars to be loaned to tenants to purchase the land they till.

Two-thirds of the counties of Alabama show a predominance of 60 to 80 per cent in the number of tenants as compared to farmers who cultivate their own land.

The problem is not concerned primarily with Negroes. As a matter of fact, the number of Negro tenants has decreased in the past 50 years, while the number of white tenants has increased at an alarming rate.

Over the country as a whole, it was shown at Senate hearings on the Bankhead tenant loan bill, tenants now comprise 53 per cent of the farm population, compared with 25 per cent in 1880.

The Bankhead bill is an admirable measure in its own right, we think. But considered in connection with the cotton production control program, it is an absolute necessity.

# Cotton Rears Head As Issue In South

(EDITOR'S NOTE:—For more than a hundred years, cotton has been the lifeblood of the south, but today great changes are taking place in the industry—changes which may result in a drastic revision of the economic life of Dixie. Following is the first of a series of articles discussing the question: "What About Cotton?")

Commercial Appeal

BY WILLIAM G. GAUDET

(Copyright, 1935, by Universal Service)

NEW ORLEANS, March 21.—The south today is confronted with one of the greatest and most intricate problems it has tackled since reconstruction days. 3-22-35

The question, when stripped of all its diversifications, startling paradoxes and innumerable ramifications, becomes simply:

"What Sall We Do About Cotton?" Memphis, Tenn

The question, of far reaching effect, thrust itself forward when the recent break saw prices tobogganing to the point that the south counted losses aggregating $100,000,000.

The break also thrust another question to the forefront:

"What about the alarming decrease in cotton exports?"

Upon the correct answer of these two questions hinges the future of the agricultural south which in turn will reflect on the United States.

And it is not without significance that two schools of thought, utterly irrecocilable, have arisen and come forward with definite and specifc answers to these problems.

One school says produce more cotton and regan the position in the world market once enjoyed by the cotton farmers of this country.

The other adheres to a crop control system, contending at the same time that acreage reduction has no true reflection upon the world consumption of American cotton.

Regardless of which school has conceived the correct solution to the problem, all available statistics and data develop two indisputable facts:

1—Foreign consumption of American cotton has decreased.

2—Foreign consumption of varieties other than American has increased.

Whatever the reason for this decline in foreign consumption of American raw cotton, all sides agree that some remedy must be found to increase the exports—

The big difference develops in a discussion of the remedies—

(Tomorrow's article concerns cotton exports and the world's consumption of cotton.)

# Revised Cotton System Is Urged In Social Report

Advertiser

## South's Principal Problem Is To Abolish Growing Tenancy, Survey Says

3-31-35

## Variety One Need

Montgomery paper

## Economic Study Reveals Most Of Sharecroppers On Farms Are Whites

NEW YORK, March 20—(AP)—Drastic readjustments of the South's "excessive devotion to cotton, its land tenure system, its out-moded credit system, and the peculiar economic status assigned the lowest level negro farmers were recommended in a summarized report made public today by the committee on minority groups in the economic recovery.

The committee is composed of Edwin R. Embree, of Chicago, president of the Julius Rosenwald Fund; Dr. Will W. Alexander, of Atlanta, director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, and Prof. Charles S. Johnson, head of the Department of Social Research of Fisk University at Nashville, Tenn.

Its 250-page report followed a year's study of agricultural, economic, and social conditions in the South, which was financed by $50,000 from the Rosenwald foundation.

The report was submitted to the Department of Agriculture a month ago, Embree and Dr. Alexander said, but was not made public then. It also has been brought to the attention of President Roosevelt, they said.

**South Faces Two Courses**

"With declining exports and increasing foreign cotton production, the South stands face to face with a choice," the committee found.

"It may choose continued regimentation of agricultural production, with subsidies for released lands and relief for displaced tenants and agricultural laborers.

"Or it may decide that this is too great a price to pay for concentrated landownership. In such a case America might well follow the example of Ireland and Denmark and embark upon a program of government aid to peasant proprietorship."

The committee emphasized that the South's problem was not a negro problem but one of tenants and share-croppers, both white and black, "in a state of peonage that approaches slavery."

"As a matter of fact, the negro no longer furnishes the bulk of cotton tenants," the report asserts. "There are 1,091,944 white tenants in the South to 698,839 colored tenants. While one may not be surprised to note that over half the negro tenants are croppers, it is startling to learn that over one-third of the white tenants are in the same poverty-stricken class.

**White Tenancy Increasing**

"White tenancy is increasing. From 1920 to 1930, a period of increasing difficulty in cotton production, negro tenant in the South decreased by about 2,000, while white tenants increased by more than 200,000."

Commenting on the report, Embree said the committee regards the Bankhead bill now before Congress as "an utterly adequate solution of the situation." He estimated that it would provide small farms, up to 40 acres for 500,000 families, plus homes, livestock, and feed.

"These people could grow most of what they need," he said, "and get some cash by raising a few bales of cotton too."

The committee's own summary of its findings sets forth these figures.

"Against an average of 42 per cent for the entire country, 58 per cent of the 3,088,111 farms in the thirteen cotton states are worked by tenants, the prevalence of tenancy running to 71 per cent in the case of cotton farms, and in certain black belt regions to 80 per cent.

"Half of these tenants are 'share croppers' owning neither land nor capital, livestock nor tools, and wholly dependent for these on their landlords.

"In Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, and the nine coast states from Texas to Virginia—the regions covered by the study—one family in every four was on relief this year, and expenditures for them totaled $212,561,552, of which 83 per cent came from the Federal Government.

Advertiser 3-31-35 Montgomery paper

In urging transition from the South's devotion almost exclusively to coton, the report says that a system of general or allaround farming could be introduced both speedily and easily at this time, thereby releasing a farm population of 16,000,000 from "as meager a diet of fatback, corn pone and molasses under as exploitonate a credit system as can be found in the world's agriculture."

"Oklahoma and Texas areas can furnish all the cotton needed for the national market at a cheaper cost of production than can be met in the South-east," the report asserts. "Level land, mechanization. Large farms, no weevil, and fewer tenants contribute to this greater efficiency.

"Delta areas—Mississippi and Arkansas—are the only ones that have been able recently to thrive and expand in the face of southwestern competition."

Answering southern arguments that tenant farmer and share croppers do not want to emulate the European peasantry, the report says "any self-respecting peasant proprietor in France would view with loathing the condition of a Mississippi cotton cropper."

# BANKHEAD SEES HOPE OF ACTION ON FARM HOMES

Birmingham

## Strong Support Given Plan For Corporation To Lend A Billion

3/28/35

By Benton J. Stong

Post Staff Correspondent

WASHINGTON, March 27.—Enthusiasm of some leading figures in the Administration for his proposed $1,100,000,000 Farm Tenant Homes Corp., encouraged Sen. John H. Bankhead of Alabama today to believe it would get early consideration in Congress.

Secretary of Agriculture Wallace Relief Administrator Hopkins and various officials in rehabilitation agencies have given the bill unreserved endorsement in principle. The source of funds for the $100,000,000 capital stock that would be subscribed by the Government—the remaining billion to be raised by a Government guaranteed bond issue—remains at issue, however. Secretary Wallace has submitted the question to the Budget Bureau.

The corporation would make loans for 30 to 50 years, preferably to tenants or sharecroppers, for the purchase of farms, homes and equipment. Interest would be "as low as the corporation can secure the money plus a reasonable charge for administration."

**Wallace Cites Trend**

As the bill is now drawn, the secretary of agriculture would direct the new loan organization, buying the $100,000,000 original capital stock with a Reconstruction Finance Corp. loan. There is a possibility, however, that the funds might be obtained from the 500 millions earmarked for rural rehabilitation in the four-billion dollar works-relief bill.

"During the past half-century, the increase of farm tenancy has been one of the undesirable and yet widespread characteristics of rural America," Secretary Wallace said at Senate hearings.

"Only two generations ago we were at the heights of the homesteads movement, which had as its fundamental aim the creation of an agriculture made up predominantly of small farm operators. Today we find that half our farm lands are operated by tenants, and nearly that large a percentage of our farmers rent all of the land they farm."

Speculators and "land grabbers," along with agricultural economic conditions, were blamed for the rapid transfer of homestead lands from settlers to others.

**Average Occupancy Brief**

"The fact that the tenant farmer has been intrusted with some of the best soils of the nation is especially serious because a large proportion of our tenants have little permanent interest in soil conservation," Mr. Wallace said.

"The average period of occupancy by tenants is only a little more than four years. Since few tenant contracts provide compensation for improvements made by the tenant, and since both landlord and tenant are usually interested in the production of cash crops, it follows that in general tenancy is largely responsible for the serious and progressive depletion of soil fertility. We can hardly deal fundamentally with erosion and other types of soil wastage until we bring about a change in the relationship of tenant farmers to the lands they operate.

"It seems to me," the secretary added, "that it will be virtually impossible for America to develop a rural civilization which affords security, opportunity and a fully abundant life for our rural people unless she acts to convert tenants of this sort into owner farmers."

**FERA Is Pioneering**

The Bankhead measure would expand an operation already started by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in its rural rehabilitation program. For more than a year, FERA has been making small loans to farmers to finance subsistence homesteads as a means of lightening relief rolls.

Under a Senate amendment to the work-relief bill, 500 million dollars is set aside for continuation of this work.

The only opposition to the measure, now held by the Senate agriculture committee, has come from Prof. John Dewey, head of the People's Lobby. In a statement he condemned the possibility of further pauperizing farmers by selling them marginal lands where they would be unable to struggle from under their load of debt.

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# AS AN AUTHORITY HERE SEES COTTON PROBLEM

*In two earlier articles Dr. Tait Butler, one of the south's foremost cotton authorities and editor of the Progressive Farmer and Southern Ruralist, discussed the probable loss of a large part of America's export cotton market and what it would mean. His conclusions are embraced in the article below which is the last of the series.*

Economical

BY DR. TAIT BUTLER

appeal

HOW DOES THE PRESENT PLAN OF COTTON PRODUCTION CONTROL AFFECT "LABOR" IN THE SOUTH?

If it is a fact, and it is, that during the two years of cotton production control the buying power of the south has been doubled and tripled over the two years immediately preceding, then it goes without saying that there has been a greatly increased demand for the products of labor and for labor, which is certainly helpful.

To be specific and consider farm labor alone, there are more people now on farms and getting a living, and a better living, from farming than immediately prior to the inauguration of the cotton production adjustment program. The condition of landowners, tenants and sharecroppers is also as a whole much better today than two years ago, as anyone who really knew conditions then and knows them now will testify. This does not mean, however, that the condition of all landowners, tenants and sharecroppers is satisfactory or that as a whole conditions are as good as urgently needed, but most emphatically, taken as a whole, the economic condition of all these classes is very much better than in 1930 to 1932 inclusive.

There is, however, one class of labor which has not been helped directly by the small crops of cotton which have necessarily been grown during the last two years, in order to reduce the carryover of 13,228,000 bales which had been accumulated by growing more cotton than the world would use, even at the low price of 6 cents a pound. This class is the handlers of cotton between the producer and the spinners. The class consists of cotton merchants and their employes, warehouse and compress employes, ginners and all others engaged in the handling of cotton. It is unfortunate that the world would not use as much cotton as the United States could and would grow, but it is difficult to see why cotton producers should be required to support this class by paying them for handling cotton produced at a financial loss to themselves. If the surplus in this class is not able to temporarily support themselves in other lines of work, then it is the duty of the south and the nation as a whole to support them, as they are doing for portions of some other classes. But if the cotton producers of the south must support a part of those who have been engaged in the handling of cotton, the part not needed to handle the cotton which the world will now use, it would be a matter of economy for cotton growers to support them through a direct contribution, instead of by the more expensive method of producing more cotton than needed, at a price below the cost of production.

If, however, when the surplus of cotton now on hand is used up the world will use 13,000,000 bales of our cotton annually, as it has done in the past, there will be employment for at least a part of those who have been unemployed because of the small crops of the last two years.

If when the south as a whole is more prosperous or has more buying power conditions are better for labor as a whole, as well as for all others, then the condition of labor is much better in the south today than for the two years immediately prior to cotton production adjustment.

VI

IS THE PRESENT COTTON PRODUCTION ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM SOUND AS A PERMANENT ECONOMIC POLICY FOR THE SOUTH?

If the purposes of the present production program are, as I believe, to reduce the carryover of cotton on July 31 to an amount that will safely meet every need of the

Dr. Tait Butler

world for United States cotton until the next crop is marketed, and then to produce every bale the world will consume at a fair price, but not enough more to depress prices below cost of production, most assuredly that is a sound economic policy and, as I see it, in the light of past experience, the only sound permanent policy as regards cotton production in this country.

It has been proved by the experience of the last two years that with the cotton farmers' first "protective tariff," the processing tax, cotton production can be controlled and by means of a government-held reserve all danger of a scarcity of cotton and excessively high prices avoided.

If the purpose of the cotton production program was to continue to produce only 10,000,000 bales, or thereabout, as so many seem to assume but without any sound reason, then prices would be forced too high, foreign production stimulated and a gradual loss of exports. But inasmuch as the world has, even during the last five years, used an average of nearly 13,000,000 bales of United States cotton annually, as soon as the surplus of cotton piled up under uncontrolled production is used up and the buying power of the world becomes normal again there is no reason for assuming that the world will not again use 12 to 14 million bales of United States cotton. Whatever amount of United States cotton the world will take in competition with other cotton growing countries it is the purpose of southern cotton growers to produce.

If the south cannot produce cotton of the same quality and value as cheaply as other countries we will inevitably lose our cotton exports, but as previously indicated the facts seem to justify the conclusion so generally held that the cotton growers of the south can and will be able to compete with those of any and all other countries, if prices are stabilized within reasonable limits at whatever figures necessary to meet foreign competition. But the foregoing offers no foundation for assuming we can continue to violate a fundamental rule of sound business, and produce more cotton than can be sold at any price. It is not our costs of producing cotton that has caused economic distress every five to seven years in the south, but our violation of a sound rule followed by successful manufacturers of producing no more than can be sold at, at least, cost of production.

The question is often raised by those outside the south, if we are not on an "artificial" basis and can a fair world price be maintained for cotton by a control of United States production. A fair competitive world price can be maintained for cotton by controlling United States production so long as foreign countries do not produce as much cotton as they use. The history of the slow development of large crop production indicates that for many years yet, with a competitive price for cotton, foreign countries will not produce their full needs for cotton.

As to whether production control can be maintained in this country depends on whether present laws or laws similar in effect can be maintained in this country. That cotton producers, nine to one, want the present laws and control program continued is attested by their votes, and with such a majority in favor of cotton production control it is a pretty safe prediction that some effective method will be found to continue it.

If the processing tax on cotton is "artificial" and unsound, then our whole protective tariff policy is unsound. The processing taxes are as good or as bad as our protective tariff. The processing taxes are a small measure of long delayed justice to farmers who for many years bought in a protected market and sold in a world's competitive and unprotected market. The processing taxes have been of tremendous benefit to farmers and in all reason and fairness should be continued as long as our general policy of protection to other industries is continued, but if suitable laws, even such as we have, can be maintained cotton production adjustment can be maintained even without the processing tax. But that the consumers of the United States who have for so long supported the protective tariff for the benefit of industry can ever deny to agriculture the small and belated protection of the processing taxes is difficult to believe.

To produce only such an amount of cotton as can be sold for at least a fair cost of production is as sound as for any manufacturer to produce only such goods as he can sell at cost of production. But owing to the large numbers of farmers, their more diverse interests and less financial independence, the methods of control must be different. Producers of a large crop like cotton, owing to the conditions under which it is produced, will not and cannot do it by purely voluntary co-operative effort. There must be a paid-for or forced control.

VII

ASSUMING THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD LOSE ITS FOREIGN COTTON MARKETS, WHAT ECONOMIC EFFECTS WOULD THAT HAVE ON THE SOUTH?

That is much too violent an assumption to be taken seriously. Any discussion of that question is, therefore, purely academic for the present generation. There is no reasonable prospect that the United States will entirely lose its foreign cotton markets in the near future. We will not lose our foreign cotton markets until foreign production equals foreign consumption. Prior to the maximum foreign crop of 1933 foreign production only took care of about 60 per cent of foreign consumption; that is, 40 per cent of the cotton consumed by foreign countries had to come and did come from the United States. Foreign production will have to increase faster than it has in the past and much faster than it is likely to, or foreign consumption decrease faster than at all probable, for the United States to entirely lose its exports of cotton for many years yet, because, owing to the conditions existing in foreign cotton growing countries, any large increase in foreign cotton production must of necessity be a slow development.

The entire loss of our cotton exports will mean a cotton production of from five to seven million bales annually to supply domestic needs. To produce from five to seven million bales of cotton would require, according to the average yields during the last 10 years, 15 to 20 million acres. Our average cotton acreage for the 12 years, 1923-24 to 1933-34, has been 38,600,000 acres. Therefore, if only sufficient cotton were grown to supply domestic needs, say 6,000,000 bales, we would have around 20 million acres, which have been planted to cotton, on which to grow other crops. It is doubtful if 20 million acres devoted to the production of food and feed crops would at first produce as much corn, hay, meats, dairy products and other food and feed supplies as the south now buys from other sections; but that does not mean that the entire loss of our cotton exports would not be a tremendous economic loss to the south, especially if it came during a short period of 5 to 10 years. The investment in equipment to produce and handle the 7,000,000 to 8,000,000 bales of cotton which we have exported annually is large and not only would a large part of this be lost, but it would also require a large new investment in the equipment necessary to cultivate, harvest and market the products from the 20,000,000 acres released from cotton production. Moreover, cotton, if produced in the south as a part of a balanced cropping system, would be the best large field crop known to the agricultural world, and this is a tremendous asset to the south. While the south could continue to get along without cotton exports, as well or better than most agricultural sections which cannot grow cotton, still the entire loss of our cotton exports would be a very serious blow to the south as well as to the nation as a whole. But that is not a contingency to be dealt with in the near future. In fact, if the south were not permitted to grow more than

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Commercial Appeal

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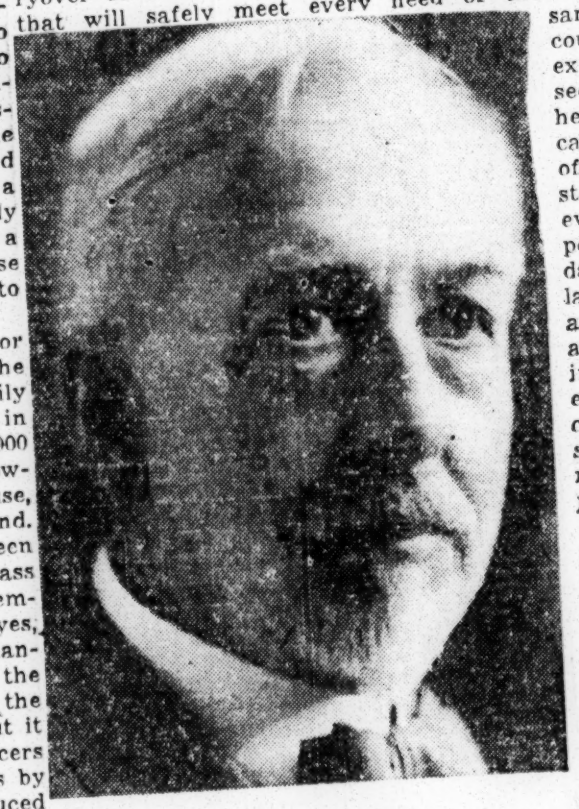

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10,000,000 bales of cotton annually for the next 10 years, if she put the released cotton acreage into the growing of food, feed and soil improving crops, it would beyond question be of tremendous benefit to this section as a whole.

VIII

If the south was to produce only the cotton needed for domestic consumption and devote all the remainder of her available land to the production of corn, hay, small grains, hogs, cattle, dairy products and other food and feed crops, what effect would that have on the agriculture of other sections?

The south has been a good market for hay, corn, oats, hogs, cattle, wheat and dairy products, etc., from other agricultural sections and, of course, if the south produced these products for itself that would mean the loss of a good market by the farmers of other sections. But this also is a contingency which does not have to be met in the near future. In the first place, the south is going to use more of her land for cotton growing than merely enough to supply cotton for domestic consumption, for we are going to continue to export 6,000,000 to 7,000,000 bales of cotton. And in the second place, if we devoted all of our available lands to the production of food and feed crops, it would take a decade or two to develop a meat and dairy industry sufficient to supply southern needs.

Revolutions do not occur in agriculture, but, of course, present trends and possible changes of magnitude must be carefully considered and fully weighed. Nevertheless, for the immediate future and for a considerable period ahead the records of cotton production and consumption in the past are much the more dependable index of what the future has in store for southern cotton growers. The cotton industry of the United States and the cotton growers of the south may be assured of a fair degree of future prosperity, if no more cotton is produced in this country than the world will use at a fair, moderate or competitive price and they devote adequate attention to the efficiency of their operations. And, if this occurs, then the north is assured of a continuation of the good market the south has always afforded for food and feed supplies. But if the south continues to grow large crops of cotton in competition with foreign countries, as it can and very probably will do, it may become an economic necessity that we produce a large part of our food and feed supplies, in order to avoid the high prices which transportation and handling cost add to these products, while adding nothing to their value.

declared for a change in G. O. P. administration.

By inference, he said the national chairman, Henry P. Fletcher, is "not getting to work soon enough."

In Chicago, liberals and leftists gathered to discuss the possibility of a third party, a party of the left, for 1936.

In Georgia, Gov. Eugene Talmadge continued his assaults on the Roosevelt administration. His friends interpreted his Fourth of July address as a bid for the Democratic nomination.

## COTTON, HOT BISCUITS AND COLLARD GREENS

There would seem to be no reason to doubt that the Senators from the cotton States believed they had positive assurances from the administration that our cotton would be pegged at 12 cents a pound.

But instead it is pegged at 9 cents with a pledge to reimburse part of the growers for part of their crop if the price in 10 spots markets should be less than 12 cents. Instead of offering to lend 12 cents outright, as last year, the government offers to give growers—that is, some growers—the difference between 9 and 12 cents.

There is little or no difference in principle in the two policies. If cotton sells on the market for less than the loan price, the government, that is, all of the American people, must contribute the difference outright. When government guarantees a fixed price the guarantee is valid.

Clark Howell, editor of The Atlanta Constitution, says it would take a Philadelphia lawyer to understand what the government means to do about all cotton that does not sell for 9 cents.

More than one critic has said that the plan is "confusing," and so it is. Certainly only those will benefit who have contracts with the government to observe their allotment contracts under the Bankhead act. Most growers have contracts, but not all of them have.

The Department of Agriculture and the Credit Corporation profess to believe that under the Wallace plan the cotton growers should realize $700,000,000 for their cotton and seed this year, which, to be sure, is substantially more than they received last year—naturally of course, since the crop this year is likely to be a million bales more than last.

Cotton Senators and cotton growers generally are embittered at the administration because of the failure of the latter to peg cotton at 12 cents, and the force of this bitterness was expressed in the Senate yesterday afternoon when it passed a bill authorizing a 12-cent loan. At the time this editorial was written the House had not had opportunity to pass upon the hurry-up bill, but the action of the Senate alone is in fact a sharp rebuke to the administration.

It is only fair to say that there is a great deal of intelligent and patriotic opinion, even in the cotton belt, to support the judgment of the administration.

There is, in fact, a growing demand for a gradual lessening of governmental control and subsidy so that cotton prices may seek their natural level in world markets. Many thoughtful people believe that in the end we shall have to adopt the policy of subsidizing the half of our cotton crop that is sold in high-price America and leaving the other half free to compete with our natural economic enemies abroad who are growing increasing amounts of cotton, this half to be sold for such prices as it can command.

They do not believe that even with the Federal treasury back of the cotton South the latter can continue to control world prices and so save the Southern cotton grower from poverty.

Manifestly Uncle Sam is not himself a cotton consumer. He is a good first-aid man to have around, but he cannot, in the nature of things, go on forever subsidizing an uneconomic industry.

This is bad medicine to swallow, but all of us know it is the truth.

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But the depression has not yet spent itself by any means, and emergency measures are still in order. We do not know of any more effective means of softening the rigors of the depression in the cotton South than by paying 12 cents a pound for middling cotton, even though some of the money will have to be donated by taxpayers instead of consumers.

Cotton money reaches far and performs miracles in this hot country in which General Lee made his fabulous reputation.

We are still building levees with greenbacks against the flood of misery that oozes from the world depression, an affliction which is likely at any moment to become more acute because nobody—but the British—has yet found a way to shave the War God against his will.

A dollar a week increase in income makes a big difference in the South, Mr. Roosevelt. It means in thousands of instances flour biscuits for breakfast on Sunday morning, in some instances flour biscuits every morning of the week.

Well placed men, such as Presidents and their bureaucrats, to say nothing of $10,000-a-year Senators and Congressmen, do not know what a luxury a flour biscuit in the cotton South is to thousands of believing Americans.

Naturally they have no way of knowing what it means to eat corn bread syrup, sow-belly and collards every day of the year in the growing season—to be sure, there are no collards except in the growing season, and even in the growing season they are not the food of kings.

Well-placed men, especially in high official position, do not realize how little sense and enterprise the lower order of cotton farmer in the South has. He lacks the imagination to see the need of and the spirit to enforce the principle of a balanced agricultural economy.

He could grow two vegetable gardens a year, but he won't do it, and everybody knows he won't do it, except under pressure.

Out of these two gardens he could can enough vegetables and fruits to give him the vitamins and the flavors he needs in all seasons.

He could keep a cow with more udder than horns, but he lacks the character necessary to make him do it.

He could keep chickens to provide choice dishes for his table, including eggs, but he rarely keeps enough of them, and those he keeps are of inferior quality.

This is a hog country—here in Alabama, with our numerous streams—we can grow hogs more cheaply than almost any other State, but the shiftless man on the farm—sometimes he is colored, sometimes he is white—rarely thinks of growing enough hogs to provide him with

spend all he gets the moment he gets it. of the men and women who grow our

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10,000,000 bales of cotton annually for the next 10 years, if she put the released cotton acreage into the growing of food, feed and soil improving crops, it would beyond question be of tremendous benefit to this section as a whole.

VIII

If the south was to produce only the cotton needed for domestic consumption and devote all the remainder of her available land to the production of c o r n, hay, small grains, hogs, cattle, dairy products and other food and feed crops, what effect would that have on the agriculture of other sections?

The south has been a good market for hay, corn, oats, hogs, cattle, wheat and dairy products, etc., from other agricultural sections and, of course, if the south produced these products for itself that would mean the loss of a good market by the farmers of other sections. But this also is a contingency which does not have to be met in the near future. In the first place, the south is going to use more of her land for cotton growing than merely enough to supply cotton for domestic consumption, for we are going to continue to export 6,000,000 to 7,000,000 bales of cotton. And in the second place, if we devoted all of our available lands to the production of food and feed crops, it would take a decade or two to develop a meat and dairy industry sufficient to supply southern needs.

Revolutions do not occur in agriculture, but, of c o u r s e, present trends and possible changes of magnitude must be carefully considered and fully weighed. Nevertheless, for the immediate future and for a considerable period ahead the records of cotton production and consumption in the past are much the more dependable index of what the future has in store for southern cotton growers. The cotton industry of the United States and the cotton growers of the south may be assured of a fair degree of future prosperity, if no more cotton is produced in this country than the world will use at a fair, moderate or competitive price and they devote adequate attention to the efficiency of their operations. And, if this occurs, then the north is assured of a continuation of the good market the south has always afforded for food and feed supplies. But if the south continues to grow large crops of cotton in competition with foreign countries, as it can and very probably will do, it may become an economic necessity that we produce a large part of our food and feed supplies, in order to avoid the high prices which transportation and handling cost add to these products, while adding nothing to their value.

declared for a change in G. O. P. administration.

By inference, he said the national chairman, Henry P. Fletcher, is "not getting to work soon enough."

In Chicago, liberals and leftists gathered to discuss the possibility of a third party, a party of the left, for 1936.

In Georgia, Gov. Eugene Talmadge continued his assaults on the R o o s e v e l t administration. His friends interpreted his Fourth of July address as a bid for the Democratic nomination.

## COTTON, HOT BISCUITS AND COLLARD GREENS

There would seem to be no reason to doubt that the Senators from the cotton States believed they had positive assurances from the administration that our cotton would be pegged at 12 cents a pound.

But instead it is pegged at 9 cents with a pledge to reimburse part of the growers for part of their crop if the price in 10 spots markets should be less than 12 cents. Instead of offering to lend 12 cents outright, as last year, the government offers to give growers—that is, some growers—the difference between 9 and 12 cents.

There is little or no difference in principle in the two policies. If cotton sells on the market for less than the loan price, the government, that is, all of the American people, must contribute the difference outright. When government guarantees a fixed price the guarantee is valid.

Clark Howell, editor of The Atlanta Constitution, says it would take a Philadelphia lawyer to understand what the government means to do about all cotton that does not sell for 9 cents.

More than one critic has said that the plan is "confusing," and so it is. Certainly only those will benefit who have contracts with the government to observe their allotment contracts under the Bankhead act. Most growers have contracts, but not all of them have.

The Department of Agriculture and the Credit Corporation profess to believe that under the Wallace plan the cotton growers should realize $700,000,000 for their cotton and seed this year, which, to be sure, is substantially more than they received last year—naturally of course, since the crop this year is likely to be a million bales more than last.

Cotton Senators and cotton growers generally are embittered at the administration because of the failure of the latter to peg cotton at 12 cents, and the force of this bitterness was expressed in the Senate yesterday afternoon when it passed a bill authorizing a 12-cent loan. At the time this editorial was written the House had not had opportunity to pass upon the hurry-up bill, but the action of the Senate alone is in fact a sharp rebuke to the administration.

It is only fair to say that there is a great deal of intelligent and patriotic opinion, even in the cotton belt, to support the judgment of the administration.

There is, in fact, a growing demand for a gradual lessening of governmental control and subsidy so that cotton prices may seek their natural level in world markets. Many thoughtful people believe that in the end we shall have to adopt the policy of subsidizing the half of our cotton crop that is sold in high-price America and leaving the other half free to compete with our natural economic enemies abroad who are growing increasing amounts of cotton, this half to be sold for such prices as it can command.

They do not believe that even with the Federal treasury back of the cotton South the latter can continue to control world prices and so save the Southern cotton grower from poverty.

Manifestly Uncle Sam is not himself a cotton consumer. He is a good first-aid man to have around, but he cannot, in the nature of things, go on forever subsidizing an uneconomic industry.

This is bad medicine to swallow, but all of us know it is the truth.

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But the depression has not yet spent itself by any means, and emergency measures are still in order. We do not know of any more effective means of softening the rigors of the depression in the cotton South than by paying 12 cents a pound for middling cotton, even though some of the money will have to be donated by taxpayers instead of consumers.

Cotton money reaches far and performs miracles in this hot country in which General Lee made his fabulous reputation.

We are still building levees with greenbacks against the flood of misery that oozes from the world depression, an affliction which is likely at any moment to become more acute because nobody—but the British—has yet found a way to shave the War God against his will.

A dollar a week increase in income makes a big difference in the South, Mr. Roosevelt. It means in thousands of instances flour biscuits for breakfast on Sunday morning, in some instances flour biscuits every morning of the week.

Well placed men, such as Presidents and their bureaucrats, to say nothing of $10,000-a-year Senators and Congressmen, do not know what a luxury a flour biscuit in the cotton South is to thousands of believing Americans.

Naturally they have no way of knowing what it means to eat corn bread syrup, sow-belly and collards every day of the year in the growing season—to be sure, there are no collards except in the growing season, and even in the growing season they are not the food of kings.

Well-placed men, especially in high official position, do not realize how little sense and enterprise the lower order of cotton farmer in the South has. He lacks the imagination to see the need of and the spirit to enforce the principle of a balanced agricultural economy.

He could grow two vegetable gardens a year, but he won't do it, and everybody knows he won't do it, except under pressure.

Out of these two gardens he could can enough vegetables and fruits to give him the vitamins and the flavors he needs in all seasons.

He could keep a cow with more udder than horns, but he lacks the character necessary to make him do it.

He could keep chickens to provide choice dishes for his table, including eggs, but he rarely keeps enough of them, and those he keeps are of inferior quality.

This is a hog country—here in Alabama, with our numerous streams—we can grow hogs more cheaply than almost any other State, but the shiftless man on the farm—sometimes he is colored, sometimes he is white—rarely thinks of growing enough hogs to provide him with the meat he eats.

This shiftless type of man whom we know so well hates cows, hogs, chickens, and vegetables, and apparently loves only houseflies, mosquitoes and hookworm larvae.

But in fact he loves cotton and believes in it more than he believes in his Bible, although it has failed him more often than his Bible has failed him.

Nevertheless this type of farmer will spend all he gets the moment he gets it.

What we need in this country is greater spending power. We need a spending power widely diffused. The best way to get quick results with "cheap" Federal money is to pour it into the pockets of those who must spend immediately or starve.

The way to create an enormous buying power in the cotton South immediately is to put money into the pockets of the men and women who grow our cotton—big money; that is, if we are genuinely interested in "relief," as well as "recovery."

We are for a 12-cent loan, on general principles, but we are for it under condition that we may keep a long tongue buried in a high cheek.

At all events we are against human misery in the cotton fields of the South!

Agriculture - 1935.
Condition of.

General

# Reconstruction Era Ahead If Cotton Picker Is Success

Editor's Note—Publicity for a machine to pick cotton and which would, if perfected, displace fom 50 to 100 men has projected the picture of a new unemployment problem before the people of the South. The equation includes the livelihood of many thousands who know no other means of providing the necessaries required to carry them through each succeeding winter. Alarmed by the possibilities in such a situation, should the machine be perfected, George H. Ethridge, presiding judge of Division B of the Mississippi Supreme Court has written the following article in which he calls upon all interested in the welfare of the south to give deep consideration to the matter. The Commercial Appeal presents Justice Ethridge's views.

### A NEW ECONOMIC MENACE

A MACHINE that would pick cotton would have a most serious effect upon the lives and industry of many people in the South. This is apparent to all who visualize the effect that labor-saving machinery has had in other industries and other sections.

For some years there have been a tremendous number of unemployed persons, and who have to suffer much for the lack of the necessaries of life, being dependent upon public or private charity. That the list would be greatly swelled by the marketing and use of the cotton picker is evident. For several generations the people of the south have depended largely upon cotton growing for the comforts and luxuries of life—though the attainment of luxuries has not been general by any means.

In the February number of the American Mercury, the opening article by Oliver Carlson, which it is ultimately hoped will do the work of a hundred human cotton pickers, which machine may be detached from the tractor which moves it over the field or plantation in its operation, leaving the tractor for any other use to which it is adapted. The universal picking of the cotton from the stalks by hand has been the only thing that prevented the hill sections of the south from being driven to give up the growing of cotton—which is the principal southern industry.

#### Creates Large Farms

In the prairie sections tractors have been used so effectively as to enable one man to do the work formerly done by many.

In the hill sections, where the tractors and improved plows and farm machinery cannot be used effectively, 20 acres for each adult laborer was about all that could be tended, while in the level lands, where there are no stumps or timber to obstruct their use, or where these have been removed, the improved machines could be used to great advantage. In these sections there is a tendency for a few men to acquire most, if not all, of the available lands, to be cultivated by machinery; thus rendering it difficult for men of small means to have farms or remunerative employment. These prairie lands are usually more productive, acre for acre, than the lands in the hills, where the struggle for existence for many has been hard; and the use of the machines will force the small landowners and tenants or share-croppers into competition with a machine, tireless and capable of accomplishing far more labor than is possible for man.

So long as the large plantation owners had to employ pickers to gather their cotton, giving employment for a brief season to many tenants or laborers, the situation was not altogether hopeless. Since the advent of the boll weevil people living in the hill sections of the south have been hard put to make a living on the farms. Many have become discouraged and drifted to the cities, where they have added materially to the unemployment problem. Farming on a small scale has long been unprofitable, and many owners of small farms have lost them.

#### Not Enough to Pay Taxes

The returns on such farms have been exceedingly small. Often there was a loss, and sometimes a place would not yield enough to pay taxes. In the hill sections of all the cotton growing states there has been a steady increase in tenant farming, caused by the abandonment of farms by small owners lacking the necessary capital, and the acquirement of their farms by more fortunate individuals, by financial institutions, and even by the government itself since it has been lending money to landowners through farm loan banks.

There are some who will hail the advent of the cotton picker, since it will enable them to grow cotton on a larger scale, more profitably; or lead to increased production by factories at less cost because of greater production of cotton by farming corporations and large land owners. But it will be otherwise with the great majority of farmers and business men, to most of whom it will mean ruin.

Since the depression started many small farmers have been in need of the necessaries of life; and share croppers and tenants have, with difficulty secured enough to enable them to go on with their occupation.

#### Market Only for Cotton

In many sections there is no other employment open to them, and they have had to depend upon cotton-growing for a livelihood, since there was no ready market for anything else, and the landlords wanted cotton, which could always be sold at some price for ready money. In the great arid sections of the southwestern states of the United States it has been grown on a large scale by some of the consuming corporations, in order to get a cheap supply for their needs. The possibility of further development along that line in those sections are apparent in the practical completion of the Boulder Dam, and other water-conserving projects, by which the cultivation of lands, due to irrigation, will no doubt be greatly increased. In the article referred to in the American Mercury, it is said:

"Giant corporations have plantations in the irrigated lands of the far west, which cover tens of thousands of acres. These organizations are vitally interested in a mechanical cotton-picker. More than one western cotton grower has told me that a successful picker would mean the immediate expansion of the southwestern cotton belt. There is land in abundance, the climate is very nearly perfect, and there are no antiquated systems of land tenure which have to be destroyed in order to reap the full benefits of mechanized cotton culture.

#### Forsees Economic Change

"What does all this mean to the old south? In the first place, it means that tenant-farming, as the dominant mode of agricultural production in cotton, is at the end of its means that the great plantations can dispense with their hundreds or thousands of hands. The old mule and the primitive plow will have to take their place in the agricultural museum of the has-beens. . . . Wage labor will replace tenantry, and from 75 per cent to 85 per cent of all labor now used in growing and gathering the cotton can be eliminated.

"It means that great masses of hand-pickers who flock into the cotton fields every fall from the cities, towns and villages of Dixie will be unnecessary. Their chief source of income will have been wiped out. It means that the greatest single source of child and woman labor in America will be abolished because it will be economically too expensive to continue using it, no matter how cheap it can be obtained, in comparison with a tractor-operated mechanical picker.

(Some of my wealthy northern acquaintances look upon this as a solution to their domestic-help problems, and foresee a plethora of southern cooks and maids.)

"It means to the tenant farmer and share-cropper an end to his usefulness. He will not know where to turn nor what to do. The cotton planter will not retain him out of the goodness of his heart, for he knows all too well that charity and successful cotton growing do not mix. He will want to plan his crops in accordance with mechanized farming and so will tear down the shacks and fences, fill in the unnecessary ditches and gullies, and lay out his field in long straight rows. The share-cropper and tenant will perhaps be told that he now has a chance to "make good on his own." The trek of the dispossessed into the nearby urban centers on a scale heretofore unparalleled in American life will undoubtedly follow."

And quoting from Professor W. F. Ogden's article on "The Influence of Invention and Discovery, in 'Recent Socail Trends:'

"The development and adoption of a cotton picker in the south small marginal farmer, who has been back of some interesting, political and social, movements, and would encourage large-scale farming. The migration of negroes to the cities would also be stimulated and this would affect race relations and the future of the negro race."

Another sober economist, O. E Baker, of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture has this to say:

"In the cotton belt mechanization may be more rapid, particularly where the plantation system of ownership and operation is extensively developed, and provided a successful cotton picker is placed on the market. . . . The large units of land are already in existence, and relief from the responsibility of furnishing a livelihood to tens and sometimes hundreds of tenants and croppers will be a powerful motive with many land owners . . . Should the use of the cotton picker become common, the reaction upon the cotton producers in the steeply rolling or hilly districts will undoubtedly be sereve. The cotton picker may compel a migration of a magnitude unparalleled in our history from the hill lands as well as from the level lands of the cotton belt to the cities.' "He sees that the mechanical picker, operated by one man, does the work of a hundred hand-pickers, and he can easily estimate the extent of his savings on this single operation."

The disastrous effect upon the hill sections of the cotton country, and its reaction upon the whole country will be exceedingly severe. It the above quoted article it is stated that according to the census of 1930 there were 115,582 full owners of cotton farms and 102,528 part owners. Of the farms owned 3,548 were operated by managers, and the rest either by the owners or their tenants, laborer or share-croppers. The number of tenants and share-croppers was 1,192,195, of whom 698,839 were colored, and the rest white. It will be readily seen that a very large part of these tenants and share-croppers will be driven out of the farming business unless a ready-money crop, with a ready market, can be supplied. It is manifest that something must be done, and done at once, to prepare a working system for this great number of men and their families. It is no easy task to devise a substitute for a cotton market. It will require immense amounts of capital and enormous construction of refrigeration plans and canneries and telegraph service to the great city markets, with distribution facilities.

#### Suggested Alternatives

The whole hill section of the south, at least, is threatened with serious disaster. The only substitutes that we now know that might be used are fruits, vegetables, cane syrup, sweet and Irish potatoes and cattle and dairy products. We must enter into competition with other sections already successfully handling or growing these products. We must undoubtedly live at home in a very large degree, and what the farm owner cannot grow on his farm he must exchange for products of local factories or canneries or dairies. If money could be had to set up farmers on this new basis it might not be so difficult; but a large percentage of them have no capital whatever, and must be cared for or furnished upon some business basis. The capital required to set up such organizations throughout the south will be so large that it staggers the mind to contemplate it. We have not much capital to use in such ventures. The success of it seems more than doubtful. But we are face to face with a problem that will require venturing, and we must do something or we will all go down in ruin.

Let every man who has the capacity think upon some scheme

which promises a solution of this problem.

We must organize co-operative associations; but we must also put into them a considerable capital, and this will only be obtained by contributions from the greater part of our people in amounts small or large, according to the circumstance of each. We should not wait until the catastrophe is upon us, but must prepare for the future, finding means of safeguarding our cotton production meanwhile, which must be carried on temporarily, at least on a small scale. The farming fields should be preserved for individual enterprise, it seems to me, and we must study methods of preserving to the citizens some business which may be carried on by men of small means.

**Keep Serfdom Out**

We must devise ways and means of keeping the great mass of American cotton producers from a serfdom which we have never known. We have never before been faced with a situation so serious. We must study the question of what may constitutionally be done by the agencies of government to preserve for the laborer some field of occupation in which he may operate a business of his own. The powers of the state and the national governments are great, and it has been said by the Supreme Court of the United States that the police power—that is, the power to make laws governing men and things—extends to all the great public needs; it must be exercised reasonably and in some relation to an object of government.

We must bring into play these powers of the government to secure the citizens of our country from threatened serfdom and pauperism. Great canning enterprises should be established at central points, in order that people living nearby may bring produce to be canned or preserved, and held for market and exchange. We must have enormous refrigerating plants for the storage of perishables, for shipment to market whenever opportunity offers. We must establish local markets, where any farmer may sell his produce, or exchange it for something he needs. The national government must bring into play, so far as possible, all its agencies, to avert the threatened injury. These enterprises, if prudently and economically managed, may soon be safe investments, and result in bringing the people of our hill sections out of practical poverty, to a state of reasonable comfort, or even a measure of affluence. The government has power to limit the business which may be done by a corporation, and through its power to impose taxes and regulate distribution, may render it possible for people still to compete.

Where an individual or a corporation is operating on a large scale by the use of machinery, and by this means making large profits, the taxing power can intervene, and collect a part of the profits for public use.

It seems that co-operative action by many states and by the nation will be required; and that it will take a considerable propaganda to get this joint action.

# WITHOUT FOOD AND SHELTER IN SOUTHLAND

## President Is Asked to Hold-up AAA Payments Until Evictions Stop

NEW YORK.—President Roosevelt was asked to "instruct the Agricultural Adjustment Administration to hold up all payments until present situation" which has resulted in the eviction of more than 100,000 white and Negro sharecroppers and tenant farmers, "is straightened out."

The telegram was sent by Walter White, secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and charged that "plantation owners and their henchmen, the sheriffs and other local peace officers, are resorting to mobbism, arrests without proof of violation of any law, evictions and wilful disregard of constitutional guarantee."

The President was urged to order the department of justice to proceed vigorously against them for "violating federal guarantees of right of peaceful assembly."

**The Telegram**

The full text of the telegram follows:

"AAA crop reduction plan has evicted from land in South more than 100,000 Negro and white sharecroppers and tenant farmers. They are without food, clothing or shelter in cotton states. Plantation owners and their henchmen, the sheriffs and other local peace officers, are resorting to mobbism, arrests without proof of violation of any law, evictions and wilful disregard of every constitutional guarantee. Unless you and the federal government intervenes, serious disorders impend. Proposed exclusion of agricultural and domestic workers from benefits of Wagner-Lewis social security bill will gravely aggravate already serious situation.

Board of directors of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People vigorously urges you to instruct AAA to hold up all payments until present situation is straightened out and to order Department of Justice to proceed vigorously against peace officers, plantation owners and all others in cotton states who are violating federal guarantees of right to peaceful assembly."

# AAA Chief Denies Non-Planters Or Estate-Owners Got Crop Payments

WASHINGTON, March 9.—(AP)—Chester C. Davis wrote James Truslow Adams today that the farm administration was not paying persons who had never grown cotton, potatoes or tobacco not to produce those commodities.

In an open letter to the historian, the farm administrator cited statements attributed to Adams in an interview published by a New York newspaper and added:

"When you pass out 100 per cent untruths such as the three cited it just makes me wonder whether you are to be taken seriously in any observations about the new deal or about anything in the present or past."

The administrator quoted the historian as having said that a friend owned land in the South "on which he had never grown or tried to grow any cotton" but that "last year the AAA sent him a check for $1,500 for the cotton he did not grow." When the friend protested, he was said to have added, "they insisted that he keep the money because it was down on the books."

Davis replied:

"You do not know of any such person as you describe. No such person exists. No cotton benefit checks for $1,500 or for any other sum whatever have been sent to any person as owners or operators of land on which cotton has never been grown."

He quoted Adams as saying another friend owning a Long Island estate had received a letter from the AAA offering to pay 80 cents per bushel for raising potatoes.

Davis replied that "the agricultural adjustment administration never had a production adjustment program for potatoes. This administration has never paid and never has offered to pay any person a single dollar for growing or for not growing potatoes."

In the third instance, Davis said Adams had told of a friend in Connecticut who had, without warning, received "a check for $1,200 for not raising tobacco when he had never thought of raising a pound of it."

The administrator replied:

"Your friend up in Connecticut, if he has received the money, must have been defrauding the Government. According to the terms of the tobacco adjustment contract, benefit payments can be made only to bona-fide growers of tobacco.

"Of course, your Connecticut friend does not exist in fact any more than the Southern landowner or the Long Island potato grower you told about. Under the Agricultural Adjustment Administration system of handling contracts no person can receive a check without warning or without first signing a contract to adjust his production."

# Urge Appointment of Race Man To Agricultural Dept.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has urged Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace that at least one Negro American of courage and experience with agricultural conditions in the South be appointed to the contemplated Labor Board designed to provide more effective protection for southern sharecroppers under the cotton control program which is designed to enforce the labor provisions of the A. A. A. crop control contracts."

"No group of farmers is more exploited than Negro farmers", the letter, signed by Walter White, N. A. C. P. Secretary continues, "hundreds of thousands of Negro sharecroppers and tenant farmers have been dispossessed from the land and forced to become homeless, shelterless and foodless nomads. Only courageous and uncompromising action by the Federal government can prevent the increasing of the number of these pitiful victims of the crop reduction program. It is imperative that at least one member of the board vested with sufficient authority be a Negro who is conversant with the plight of these Negro farmers. The man chosen, however, should be a full member of the Board, empowered to act with equal authority upon the cases of all farmers."

# Letters to the Editor

**COTTON PROSPECTS**

To The Commercial Appeal:

Your editorial of last Saturday was both timely and cogent. I refer to your discussion of the Bankhead bill, in which you urged immediate action by Secretary Wallace toward keeping his promises of last fall.

Now that all the heat of the discussion regarding the Bankhead bill is past, it might be well to look into some of the features of the voting, etc.

Your straw poll was well conducted and worthy, and no effort was made to influence the voters. The result was an unbiased view of the farmers. The majority were opposed to the Bankhead bill and while a majority voted for some form of compulsory control, I found in conversation that many of these thought this question referred to the acreage reduction or voluntary reduction. That was the only confusion about your poll.

However, after your poll was taken the AAA realized that there was a great deal of opposition to the continuation of the Bankhead bill, and to offset it made the promise to correct all inequities, etc. It remains to be seen whether this promise will be kept. I predict that if it is not kept there will be trouble, and if it is kept, there will also be trouble. This is because if the promise to those who were mistreated last year is not kept, they are going to raise the roof. If this promise is kept these mistreated ones will have to be given larger allotments. To do this hundreds of thousands of bales of cotton will have to be added to these too small allotments. Where is that cotton coming from? It can come only from those who have had fat allotments and who were so smugly satisfied last year. Then listen for the howl. This is bound to be because the top figure for the crop has been fixed and will not be raised. Then what?

Let me say in conclusion that your poll was fair and honest and reflected the true sentiment of the farmers. Mr. Wallace promised a hands-off attitude, then sent all his henchmen in to work for the election of a continuance of the bill. These hearties misrepresented the true situation in many instances. They reminded the ignorant farmers of their benefit checks, which, of course, the Bankhead bill had nothing to do with and which were paid to those who signed the reduction contracts.

T. E. SIMPSON.

Sidon, Miss.

Agriculture - 1935

General.

Condition of

# Rust Brothers Finish Work On Spindle Cotton Picker; Eli Whitneys of New Day

Commercial Appeal
May 5 35

## Machine Expected To Revolutionize Agriculture In South With End of Sharecropper System Possible Result

Yesterday—the eve of the 1935 Memphis Cotton Carnival—saw the last rotating spindle slipped into place on an invention which appears likely to revolutionize southern agriculture.

For it was yesterday, in an improved workshop in Florida that the Rust brothers, perhaps the Eli Whitneys of the twentieth century—put the finishing touches on their new Universal Pull-Model Cotton picker, a mechanical cotton harvester more promising than any previously constructed.

Last fall the Rusts exhibited their first harvester in the cotton fields. It was hailed by farmers and farm experts alike. But it called for a machine mounted on a tractor. This was not considered practical because of the expense in devoting one tractor entirely to cotton picking.

Back to work went the Rusts. Months passed. Yesterday their work was complete. For the first time they exhibited a new cotton picker which can be attached to a tractor and pulled through the fields as it harvests the fleecy staple.

### Years of Work

Operation of the Rust Harvester is comparatively simple. But it has taken the brothers, John D. and Mack D. Rust, years to perfect their idea. The principle upon which it is based is that cotton sticks to anything wet. If the moist object has pull, it will draw the cotton away with it.

John D. Rust remembered that his grandmother moistened her spinning wheel to make the cotton stick to it. He remembered this years after he and Mack, orphan lads on a Texas cotton farm, had spent long days of back-breaking toil in the cotton field picking the crop. He had resolved then that some day he would figure out a way to pick that cotton by machinery. The moisture principle was an afterthought, but it did not come too late.

### Straddles Cotton Row

The Rust Harvester has a long, tunnel-like opening on one side so that the machine can straddle the cotton row. Along this opening passes a belt that is perpetually moving. Attached to the belt are hundreds of small, smooth, spinning rods o rspindles, projected sideways so as to pass through the cotton plants. Prior to their entrance into the plants, the spindles are automatically moistened. Wet, the spind'es comb like a fine, but harmless, brush through the stalks of cotton. The open cotton adheres to the damp spindles, is pulled away from the boll by the rotating movement, and wraps around the spindle. The cotton is then stripped from the spindles by another mechanical device and delivered by a suction fan to a container.

"The fact that cotton usually opens unevenly is no hindrance to the operation," says John Rust. "It may be passed over the rows as often as desired without injury to the stalks or green bells.

"The machine will cover about an acre per hour, the amount of cotton picked depending upon the yield per acre, and will do the work of 50 to 100 people.

"The Universal Pull-Model picker which will be placed on the market can be pulled and powered by an ordinary row-crop farm tractor and can be quickly hitched and unhitched, freeing the tractor for other work. The machine will weigh about 2,100 pounds and will be priced at $995."

Mr. Rust figures this picker can be operated at an overall cost of 9 cents per acre and that cotton can be harvested with it at about one-fifth the cost of hand picking. He says the percentage spent for harvesting the crop each year will be reduced fro ambout 25 per cent to around five per cent of the total cost.

Millions have been spent in experiments on mechanical cotton pickers, but the Rust machine is the first to attract the attention of men like Will Dockery, Mississippi planter, and W. E. Ayres, director of the Delta Experiment Station at Stoneville, Miss.

Replying to an inquiry, Mr. Dockery telegraphed The Commercial Appeal: "It is only picker I ever saw I think is worth considering. I saw it actually pick cotton."

Mr. Ayres, although he has not seen the new Pull-Model, sent this wire: "Have not seen new model picker. Old model very promising and should have been manufactured."

### End of Sharecroppers

The Rusts frankly admit that the sharecropper system will be forced into the discard entirely if their device comes into general use.

"Drastic and sudden readjustments of social relations in the south will probably come as a result of the introduction of the mechanical cotton picker," they say.

"The sharecropper system of the old south will have to be abandoned. The new system, with completely motorized cotton growing and harvesting, will eliminate about 75 per

## Nne to Graduate

HOLLANDALE, Miss., May 4. — Nine students will graduate Monday night at the Catchings Consolidated High School. Dr. D. M. Nelson, president of Mississippi College, will speak. The graduates will be Cleo Newcomb, Pegg Pugh, Katie Chaney, Bobbie Boykin, Christine Barlow, James Lockridge, James Boykin, Clifton Boykin and Price Hodges. The Rev. Hershel J. Logan will deliver the baccalaureate sermon at the school tomorrow morning.

**NEW YORK TIMES**

MAY 5 1935

# SHARE-CROPPERS

## Little Benefit for Them Seen in Bankhead Bill

*To the Editor of The New York Times:*

To THE TIMES and its correspondent, F. Raymond Daniell, must go the thanks of all thoughtful Americans for an excellent series of articles on the plight of the Arkansas share-croppers. Mr. Daniell has given a true and faithful account of the peonage of the plantation, of night-riding and other acts of terrorism employed by the planters to maintain their hold, and the attitude of supposedly respectable elements of the community toward these things. One or two or three matters which he has brought up I should like to comment.

The first is the necessity of organization. Emphatically neither in Arkansas nor anywhere else in the cotton country will there be an exception to the historical rule that the exploited have to work out their own emancipation. The one essential, if faith in a better way of emancipation than violence is to have any validity, is that the right to organize should be protected.

The Southern Tenant Farmers Union has done and is still doing a remarkable job with the material at hand and under the difficulties it faces. The terrorism against it is proof of its strength, and the attempt to rationalize or condone that terror by talking about "outside agitators" is pure bunk. The actual organization work has been done by Southerners.

### Most Are Democrats.

In a country with a national, not a regional, economy, where all of us pay a processing tax on cotton and where a great many of the largest landowners are absentee owners, who are "outsiders" anyhow? If individual Socialists rather than New Deal Democrats have led the way in organization, that is to the credit of socialism or the Socialists, but the majority of the members of the union are still Democrats—when they can afford to vote at all.

Mrs. Dilling's book, the present bible of the planters, lists Mrs. Roosevelt among the Red. If she or Jim Farley or President William Green of the A. F. of L. would give active help to the share-croppers the planters would nevertheless make the same resort to terrorism. It is only pressure on them by publicity, by holding up benefit payments from AAA, and by extending to agricultural workers the same legal rights which have been or may be possessed by industrial workers, that violence can be prevented in Arkansas or the union can be kept from going underground.

The second point which I want to emphasize is that the harmony between races within the union was the result of the logic of the situation. It is impossible to treat Negroes as less than human without extending the same treatment to white men in the same economic status. About the only advantage the white man has is that he may be called "Mister" and is a little less likely to be lynched. The deliberate exploitation of race prejudice by the planting class has been a favorite and hitherto successful means of preserving their power of exploitation. The present terror has been resorted to largely because the planters found it more difficult than formerly to play off the races against each other.

### Department Inactive.

Finally may I point out that the facts do not justify Mr. Daniell's seeming optimism about the hopeful quality of the administration's interest in this issue? It is at best a swivel-chair liberalism and at worst such pure hypocrisy as is embodied in Section 7 of the cotton contracts. This seems to grant to agricultural workers a degree of protection which in fact it denies them.

When I first called attention to the plight of these forgotten men, high officials of the Department of Agriculture virtually called me a liar. Later Professor Calvin Bryce Hoover's investigation proved that I was right. Yet the Department of Agriculture has taken no efficient steps for the protection of share-croppers.

For this sort of thing the Bankhead bill offers no cure. Cotton cultivation, especially with the cotton picking machine on the horizon, will never be carried on by subsidized peasants. The Bankhead bill as it stands will do more to bail out landowners and holders of mortgages on land than the share-croppers. Space forbids my arguing this point, which deserves far more space in our press than it has had. At its most helpful best the Bankhead bill with amendments will not be a substitute for the right to organize or atone for the hypocrisy of the cotton contracts.

NORMAN THOMAS.

New York, May 2. 1935.

**WILMINGTON, DEL.**
**JOURNAL-EVERY EVENING**

MAY 6 1935

## By-Product of Cotton Policy

From the Manchester Union

Besides ruining our textile industry and destroying our foreign market for raw cotton, there is another by-product of our Federal cotton policy that is not so obvious in this section of the country. That is the pitiable plight of the tenant and the share-cropper in the cotton States of the South.

Prior to the enactment of the AAA, these two classes filled an important part in cotton production. The tenant was the man who rented land, supplied his own tools, and cultivated it for himself. The share-cropper worked land for the owner on shares, the latter financing him until the crop was grown and marketed, when the relation between them ceased unless it was renewed for another year. The majority of tenants were whites, while the majority of share-croppers were Negroes.

Then came the AAA with its program of crop curtailment. Naturally, the tenant and share-cropper suffered. The larger cotton growers, who owned the land, withdrew their rental or share lands from production, thereby depriving both these classes of their means of subsistence.

# Southern Cotton Grower Must Meet New Conditions To Hold World Supremacy, Holds Jordan

Editor The Constitution: There is no subject of greater vital importance to the welfare of southern farmers and the progressive development of all industries in the cotton-growing states than that of cotton.

It is the most valuable monetary staple crop of the nation and provides not only unrivaled new wealth each year but it is the principal source of the circulating medium of trade, employment and general industry in the south.

For approximately 100 years up to 1933 the south controlled a monopoly of growing and supplying the textile spinners of the world with a superior short-length staple.

So long as this monopoly lasted domestic and foreign spinners were helpless and forced to purchase and consume the primitive, wasteful and uneconomic bales of American cotton delivered to their mills.

For the past 30 years foreign and New England spinners have consistently condemned the system of American baling at the gins, recompression and the covering of heavy and objectionable jute bagging.

The perpetuation of this old-time system of baling, inaugurated in the days of the tallow candle, has continued unabated to the present and in the face of the multiplied objections and condemnation on the part of the textile spinners, who are the only customers of southern-grown cotton.

The American monopoly in cotton-growing and consumption by the world textile industry has now disappeared in the face of expanding competition in cotton acreage, improved staple lengths of the lint and more modern economic methods employed in baling and tare covering by the leading foreign cotton-growing countries.

The south has lost 40 per cent of its annual average exports of raw cotton in the past two years while the consumption of foreign-grown cotton has increased correspondingly.

**Must Meet New Conditions.**

Either southern farmers must prepare to meet the changing conditions confronting their great staple crop by turning their attention and energies to other money crops in the form of grains, truck and livestock or undertake to meet and overcome the present competition in cotton growing by improving the quality and length of the staple and inaugurating a system of high density gin compression, with the bales covered with light cotton bagging and the lint sold under the net weight contract.

Carefully prepared statistics showing the economies of high density gin compression with the present expensive methods employed indicate that growers and spinners of American cotton annually sustain a loss of $100,000,000, or $1,000,000,000 every 10 years, as a tribute to the existing primitive and costly system of baling.

These losses are charged to excessively high freight rates, land and water, insurance, storage, tare, waste and handling between the producers and cotton mill centers in this and foreign countries.

At the seventeenth annual conference of the international cotton conference held at Rome, Italy, May 4, the American cotton-growing industry was not only condemned in strong resolutions but the following ultimatum was issued by the president of the congress:

"We do not threaten a boycott, we are merely telling America that if the product does not improve we won't buy it; we are saying if your apples are spotted you can keep them."

The foreign spinners now feel that they are no longer forced to purchase the ragged, wasteful and uneconomical bales prepared in this country for shipment and delivery to their mills.

In the summer of 1918 during the progress of the World War, it was found impossible to promptly move the cotton bales required in domestic consumption and for the allies due to the loosely packed, cumbersome packages, with a heavy shortage in freight cars and ships.

The government promptly investigated the matter and in order to relieve the situation the War Department was authorized to order manufactured 10,000 high density gin compresses for quick installation in southern ginneries.

I attended the investigation before the War Industries Board and participated in the conference. The indorsement of high density gin compression at the time was signed by the secretaries of agriculture, commerce, War Department, Shipping Board and the War Industries Board.

Before blueprints could be drawn and the manufacture of the presses gotten under way the armistic brought a close to hostilities and the movement for reforms in baling cotton as a war measure.

Cotton is vitally essential in war and this nation has a double reason for taking steps to abolish the present unsatisfactory system of baling cotton, as cotton constitutes the largest export item in international commerce each year.

The textile industry in this country has enjoyed the profitable benefits of a protective tariff on imported manufactured cotton fabrics for 100 years, while the cotton growers have been forced to sell their staple in a world open, unprotected market under Liverpool regulations as to tare and prices.

**Effect of Overproduction.**

It cannot be denied, or even argued against, that the excessive production of raw cotton in this country for the past 50 years has tended to wreck and ruin the finances of southern farmers; destroyed the natural fertility of their soils; largely increased farm tenantry; leaving thousands of farmers as practical paupers on their own domain and retarding the industrial development of the otherwise magnificent natural resources of the south.

In effectively reducing cotton acreage and enforcing a control of cotton production with other protective farm measures, the federal administration at Washington has inaugurated a movement of incalculable benefit to southern farmers and every other line of industry in the south.

To revive and improve the cotton-growing industry under the changing conditions which lie ahead, there should be a continued fixed loan value on all cotton for domestic consumption at a price which will guarantee a fair and reasonable profit to the growers above an economic cost of production.

If foreign countries with pauper-paid labor wish to grow cotton at cheaper prices than southern farmers can produce the staple under decent standards of living, then and in that event, the federal government should make provision to pay the growers a bonus of 2 or more cents per lint pound on all cotton required for export if the world prices for such staples are lower than the domestic prices.

Also reform the present methods employed in baling cotton, tare, freight and handling charges so as to give to American growers an equality in the economic delivery of their staple to all textile mill centers equal to those of any other country in the world.

The present drift to national self-containment as emphasized by the recent enactment of laws by congress to prevent individuals, banks and the government from making loans to foreign countries, coupled with demands for higher tariffs on imports will tend to further restrict embargoes on our international commerce.

Under these rapidly changing conditions the agricultural industry of the south should be protected from imports of vegetable oils, food and feed products except where such imports are essential to supply demands not available from the farms in this country.

The south can regain her supremacy in cotton production with compulsory cotton acreage reduction; intensive culture and improving the staple; economic reforms in baling and making southern farms absolutely self-sustaining through diversification of crops and bring back to this section of the nation an era of prosperity and farm independence which should at all times be the best guide to the destinies of a people so blest by nature with a marvelous climate and soil.

HARVIE JORDAN.

Atlanta, Ga., May 7, 1935.

**FORTY ACRES AND—**

Although as yet the New Deal has not extended its farm production control plans to include plowing under every third mule, the prices now being paid for this lowly animal are the highest in the past 18 years.

There has been no price pegging, no tariff protection, and no advance from the brain trust to boost the price of mules. Yet advices from markets at Atlanta, St. Louis, Memphis and other cities are to the effect that the demand for mules is the highest since the World War.

The wise-acres might contend that the price of mules has risen because they have been in demand as the chief moving force behind the "plowing under program." But the demand for mules must be explained on other grounds.

"Forty acres and a mule" has a significance today that has not been paralleled since Reconstruction days. The necessity of a mule in any plan of rural rehabilitation is recognized today just as it was in the times following the sixties.

There is something fudamental about the use of a mule in wresting an existence from the soil. Since man first began to scratch the soil with a stick, rather than depend on the chances of Nature for his food, no other animal has been found that can equal the mule in the work of tilling the earth. The part this biological monstrosity has played in turning the soil into man's slave from a system under which man was the slave of the soil cannot be underestimated.

Oscar H. Whilden, of New Orleans, who has been merchandising mules for 20 years, both for the domestic and export trade, in commenting on the startling advance in mule values, said:

"A choice, sound, healthy pair of young cotton mules, weighing 900 to 1,000 pounds each, is worth today from $300 to $350. Two years ago they would have brought approximately $200 to $250 a pair. On the present market larger animals such as draft animals, sugar mules and good farm mules are worth from $450 to $550 a pair, while prior to two years ago they would only bring from $300 to $350 a pair. Mules for export to Central America, the West Indies and the Leeward and Windward Islands have advanced in price approximately 50 per cent."

The mule is distinctly an institution of the United States. Its price in all other countries is largely determined by the supply and demand in this country.

Because of limited production and general uniformity as regards quality, the mule market neither advances nor declines rapidly unless there is a decided change in conditions.

As a heartening sign of recovery, The Advertiser values the price of mules more highly than it does the predictions of the learned economists and their charts and production curves.

When we place a high value on the mule, we are getting somewhere.

Tarrant, Ala., Standard
May 7, 1935

# Dixie Tradition At Stake; Where Was Huey Long?

Where was Huey Long when the anti-lynching bill was before the Senate? This is a question southerners are asking. Dixie Senators had a hard fight killing this legislation which would have destroyed the last vestige of state rights. While rated as one of the best filibusters in the Senate, Huey's voice during the seven day debate was as silent as the tomb. Furthermore, he is not on record against the measure. When one vote would have brought victory to the southerners two days before they won, Long could not be found, although he had answered a previous quorum call.

There has been some talk that the Senator is seeking to line up the negroes of the North in his "Share Our Wealth" clubs so as to give him added strength in the presidential campaign. For some reason he would not take part in the Southern filibuster against the anti-lynching bill. There must be an interesting story behind Long's new found silence and when it comes out it will probably make interesting reading matter.

Agriculture - 1935

Condition of

General.

# John H. McFadden Jr. Discusses Serious Phase of Cotton Situation Involved in Rapid Loss of Exports

**By JOHN H. McFADDEN JR.,**
**President of the New York Cotton Exchange and Senior Partner of George H. McFadden & Bros. Agency.**

In 1850 the American cotton crop was only 2,136,000 bales. In 1875 it was 4,303,000 bales. In 1900 it was 10,123,000 bales. and in 1926 it reached the record of all time of 18,000,000 bales. During these years, production was making great strides, but so was consumption and new uses were found for cotton year by year.

We have claimed cotton as an American monopoly, and why not? Until very recently we grew more than all the other nations put together. Everyone connected with it was making a living, sometimes good and sometimes bad, but nonetheless a living. Its cost was reasonable as compared to cottons grown elsewhere, and its quality being more desirable, it had the preference over them in foreign consuming markets.

Then came the crash in 1929—consumption fell off, surpluses of cotton started to pile up, and prices went from an average of 18 cents to 20 cents during a few years prior to 1929 to about 5 cents.

In due course, the government decided to do something about it. It decided to raise prices by curtailing production. It plowed up cotton which was just blooming and paid the farmer for doing it. It made him loans on the condition that he would curtail his acreage, and finally, last year, the Bankhead bill was enacted restricting the amount of cotton which could be marketed without tax to a little over ten million bales.

So far, so good. In two years cotton went from 5 cents to 12 cents, so that on the face of it the experiment was a success. Only one flaw appeared in this picture; namely, other countries which were producing cotton cheaper than we could welcomed our program with unmitigated satisfaction and promptly proceeded to increase their cotton acreage as much as they could. The result of this has been that, with very little effort, in the last 12 months they have taken a large part of our export markets from us owing to the abnormal price disparity of foreign grown cotton as compared with American cotton.

This is an actuality, not a theory, and therefore becomes a national question and not a sectional one. It is time that not only the few millions who are interested in cotton but our citizenship at large should know something about the situation.

If there are any doubts left as to how serious this situation is, perhaps the following figures will do much to emphasize the situation:

Last year, Sao Paulo produced the equivalent of about 450,000 American bales, and although this cotton was sold infinitely cheaper than American cotton, it still was sold at very handsome profits to Liverpool and the continent. The result of this enterprise was so satisfactory from a financial point of view that this year South Brazil has doubled its cotton acreage. Weather permitting, therefore, it should produce by next spring about 900,000 bales.

The Pernambuco section estimates it will produce about 750,000 bales this year. In this district the growing of cotton is not new as it has been an important agricultural product for over 100 years.

In both the south and north of Brazil there is a vast expanse of virgin territory which can be transformed into cotton fields almost overnight by the simple expedient of burning down the now existent jungle. This is actually being done in both sections and cotton is being planted in these fields. It is easy to see that there is no limit to the possible increase in acreage increase in Brazil.

There have been heavy importations of ginning machinery into both north and south Brazil by native firms and American firms which constitutes a capital investment and which to some extent is an assurance that cotton production on a substantial scale will continue. Owing to the low scale of living the cost of production is much lower than ours while the fertility of the soil is such that the yield per acre is comparable to ours without the use of fertilizer.

Last but not least, Brazil is a primitive country and must import all sorts and varieties of merchandise if it is going to expand. Before this is possible, Brazil must be able to export in order tot get foreign exchange. This is an ideal opportunity for such countries as Germany and Italy, especially the former. Germany wants cotton but cannot get it unless it exports its own products. Brazil wants machinery and can pay for it in cotton. Therefore, barter trading is infinitely more practicable between Germany and Brazil than between Germany and the United States.

The American cotton producer is faced today with a very real threat which he can no longer afford to disregard. The past two years of high-priced cotton have acted like a narcotic and have lulled him into a happy state of security. It is not to be believed that this condition is permanent. Our government may continue the policy of crop control, loans, etc., for some time to come but it cannot continue such policy indefinitely. The question which concerns every American citizen, especially the cotton farmer is—What is going to happen when this idea is not original and it is the load becomes topheavy and the worthy of the most serious considera-government is forced to abandon the tion. By such a plan, we would have present experiments? If this does not exported more cotton, avoiding to a occur in the very near future, it will large extent the surpluses which are be too late. We will wake up some now piling up in the government's day to the fact that we have lost our hands, we would have maintained the export markets and that Brazil and markets which had been ours other countries have supplanted us, years, and substantially more

It makes no difference what title would have been employed in the is given to the various acts of legis- dling, transporting and shipping of lation which have resulted in highe prices for cotton. The result is the same. We have embarked upon a program which is tantamount to paying the farmer a bonus not to export his cotton. The program has entailed an expenditure of huge sums of money of the country as a whole if we pursued the reverse policy and gave the farmer a bonus to export his cotton. Suppose there had been no 12 cent loan this year, that the Bankhead act had provided for 12,000,000 bales, and that this amount of cotton had been produced. Would it not have been cheaper and better in the long run to have pro-rated among all the cotton farmers a fixed sum on every bale that was exported provided the mar-

**FOREIGN CONSUMPTION OF AMERICAN AND FOREIGN COTTONS.**
(American cotton in running bales; foreign cottons in 500-lb. gross weight bales).

| | AMERICAN | | | FOREIGN | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1933 | 1934 | | 1933 | 1934 | |
| | Aug.1-Nov.30 | Aug.1-Nov.30 | | Aug.1-Nov.30 | Aug.1-Nov.30 | |
| Great Britian | 515,000 | 338,000 | | 398,000 | 529,000 | |
| Continent, Excl. Russia | 1,429,000 | 1,064,000 | | 663,000 | 774,000 | |
| Japan | 576,000 | 650,000 | | 405,000 | 474,000 | |
| China | 157,000 | 96,000 | | 643,000 | 705,000 | |
| Others | 112,000 | 83,000 | | 888,000 | 1,000,000 | |
| | 2,789,000 | 2,231,000 | | 2,997,000 | 3,572,000 | |

**COTTON'S CRITICAL PROBLEM**

Taking the position that American cotton interests can no longer disregard the serious threat of injury from the loss of foreign markets, John H. McFadden, president of the New York Cotton Exchange, in an article appearing elsewhere on this page, paints a startling picture of conditions now existing in the world cotton market which will, should the ratio of increase and decrease be continued, bring about a grave threat to America.

The loss of our foreign cotton markets is not a sectional problem, for whatever of good or evil exists in the present situation has a direct effect of our economic structure. Since the War Between the States cotton exports have been responsible for the favorable trade balance enjoyed by the United States in world commerce. If we lose our cotton exports, the favorable trade balance will disappear and every business and financial interest in the country will suffer.

What the remedy may be remains to be seen, but it is a problem which should command the attention of the whole country.

warns that "we will wake up some day to the fact that we have lost our export markets and that Brazil and other countries have supplanted us."

The decrease in foreign consumption of American cotton and the increased consumption of foreign-grown staple has already created a serious situation and one that is grave indeed.

So grave is the situation and the threat of disaster so national in scope, warns Mr. McFadden, that "it is time that not only the few millions who are interested in cotton, but our citizenship at large should know something about it."

In 1933 foreign consumption of American cotton amounted to 2,789,000 bales as against a consumption of cotton grown outside the United States of 2,997,000 bales, but the picture was far different last year when consumption of American cotton in the same foreign markets fell to 2,231,000 bales and consumption of foreign-grown cotton increased by leaps and bounds to 3,572,000 bales.

As a result of the artificially boosted price of American cotton, foreign acreage has been largely increased during the past two years and will be still greater this year.

The most serious threat, as Mr. McFadden points out, lies in the development of cotton production in Brazil, which only a few years ago produced practically no cotton but in 1934 raised 450,000 bales. This year it is expected that 900,000 bales will be produced and huge areas of jungle land are now being cleared for cotton planting.

Labor and land costs in Brazil are far less than in the United States and the virgin land will produce as much cotton per acre without fertilization as can be raised in the United States with enrichment of the soil. Production costs can be expected to remain for many years lower than in the United States.

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Constitution
2-17-35
Atlanta

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Last but not least, Brazil is a primitive country, and must import all sorts and varieties of merchandise if it is going to expand. Before this is possible, Brazil must be able to export in order to get foreign exchange. This is an ideal opportunity for such countries as Germany and Italy, especially the former. Germany wants cotton but cannot get it unless it exports its own products. Brazil wants machinery and can pay for it in cotton. Therefore, barter trading is infinitely more practicable between Germany and Brazil than between Germany and the United States.

The American cotton producer is faced today with a very real threat which he can no longer afford to disregard. The past two years of high-priced cotton have acted like a narcotic and have lulled him into a happy state of security. It is not to be believed that this condition is permanent. Our government may continue the policy of crop control, loans, etc., for some time to come but it cannot continue such policy indefinitely. The question which concerns every American citizen, especially the cotton farmer is—What is going to happen when the load becomes topheavy and the government is forced to abandon the present experiments? If this does not occur in the very near future, it will be too late. We will wake up some day to the fact that we have lost our export markets and that Brazil and other countries have supplanted us.

It makes no difference what title is given to the various acts of legislation which have resulted in highe[r] prices for cotton. The result is the same. We have embarked upon a program which is tantamount to paying the farmer a bonus not to export his cotton. The program has entailed an expenditure of huge sums of money. Would it not be more to the interest of the country as a whole if we pursued the reverse policy and gave the farmer a bonus to export his cotton.

Suppose there had been no 12 cent loan this year, that the Bankhead act had provided for 12,000,000 bales, and that this amount of cotton had been produced. Would it not have been cheaper and better in the long run to have pro-rated among all the cotton farmers a fixed sum on every bale that was exported provided the market was below, let us say, 10 cents? This idea is not original and it is worthy of the most serious consideration. By such a plan, we would have exported more cotton, avoiding to a large extent the surpluses which are now piling up in the government's hands, we would have maintained the markets which had been ours for years, and substantially more labor would have been employed in the handling, transporting and shipping of cotton to foreign markets.

It is unnecessary for our purposes here to cover all the countries producing cotton outside of the United States. It will be sufficient to give a brief resume of what is happening in Brazil, which country now gives every indication of outstripping all others as a formidable competitor.

To begin with, Brazil has two cotton-growing sections, namely Sao Paulo (South Brazil) whose crop moves in the spring, and Pernambuco (North Brazil) whose crop moves in the fall.

In order to get a clear picture of the future prospects of Sao Paulo cotton it will be necessary to consider for a moment the coffee situation, Sao Paulo being the major coffee growing territory in the world. For the past ten years the Brazilian government has been endeavoring to keep up the price of coffee by the control of exports and later by the destruction of surplus production. About three years ago a law was passed obligating coffee planters to sell a proportion of their crop to the government at a price which just about pays for the cost of production. This law is invoked when production exceeds estimated local consumption and exports and the portion purchased by the government is destroyed. The coffee planters therefore must always reckon with the prospects of having to dispose of a substantial proportion of their crop at no profit and for this reason it can well be believed that they are eager to put an increasing quantity of their coffee land into cotton. It can also be believed that this movement is receiving every possible encouragement from the Brazilian government.

**FOREIGN CONSUMPTION OF AMERICAN AND FOREIGN COTTONS.**
(American cotton in running bales; foreign cottons in 500-lb. gross weight bales).

| | AMERICAN 1933 Aug.1-Nov.30 | AMERICAN 1934 Aug.1-Nov.30 | FOREIGN 1933 Aug.1-Nov.30 | FOREIGN 1934 Aug.1-Nov.30 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Great Britian | 515,000 | 338,000 | 398,000 | 529,000 |
| Continent, Excl. Russia | 1,429,000 | 1,064,000 | 663,000 | 774,000 |
| Japan | 576,000 | 650,000 | 405,000 | 474,000 |
| China | 157,000 | 96,000 | 643,000 | 705,000 |
| Others | 112,000 | 83,000 | 888,000 | 1,000,000 |
| | 2,789,000 | 2,231,000 | 2,997,000 | 3,572,000 |

# Growing Fav[illegible] Bankhead Tenant F[illegible] Is Indicated

## Officials Believe [illegible] Best Approach To Problem

WASHINGTON, Feb. 10.— (AP) — Officials said today there was growing support within the administration for a measure drawn by Senator Bankhead (D), Alabama, which proposes Federal loans to help end the tenant system of farming.

Bankhead, author of the compulsory cotton control act, drafted his bill while agricultural adjustment officials were concerned with reports of rising resentment against the AAA and landlords among Southern sharecroppers and renters.

The Alabama Senator's proposal would establish an agency similar to the Home Owners Loan Corporation. Only tenants would be eligible for the loan to purchase lands already in cultivation. The loans would bear a low rate of interest and would be amortized over a period of 30 years.

"I want the rentals now being paid to finance, ultimately," Bankhead said today, "the farm purchased by each tenant."

Secretary Wallace and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration have said nothing publicly about the latest Bankhead bill but some officials who have studied the problem feel it is the most logical approach toward the elimination of a system admittedly bad.

The national resources board in its report assailed the Southern tenant system but concrete proposals to get rid of it were lacking.

Some supporters of the Bankhead measure would not be surprised if President Roosevelt approved his proposal or similar legislation. Senator Russell (D) Georgia, also has put forward a measure with ideas similar to those in the Bankhead bill.

Although the AAA had an investigator, Mrs. Mary C. Myers, in eastern Arkansas during recent trouble there between spokesmen for tenants and authorities, there was little indication today that any drastic change would result from her report.

An attempt was made to interpret the voluntary cotton contract as stipulating that landlords must retain the tenants not required to keep the same tenants and that the contract meant landowners were not to displace tenants without obtaining others to take their places. Even this requiremetn is elastic. Mrs. Myers's report is in the hands of AAA officials but it has not been made public.

AAA officials said that reverses in recent years had deprived many former landowners of their farms and that there had been a surprising growth of tenant conditions in areas outside the South.

SENATOR BANKHEAD

# Danger In Theories; Keep AAA Practical

Secretary of Agriculture Wallace has courageously done a wise and salutary thing by purging and reforming the ranks of the AAA to the end that conservative, experienced men shall remain in control of the administration and interpretation of the cotton program.

From the inception of the cotton control plan the essentially gratifying and encouraging fact about it all has been Mr. Wallace's willingness to entrust the handling of the difficult problems involved to the hands of men who knew cotton and cotton growers. Apprehension was correspondingly great and justified within the recent past when it became apparent that socialistically inclined idealists, or worse, were making a concerted effort to supplant those same qualified men.

Once the situation was presented to Mr. Wallace in its true light, however, he acted swiftly, and he has thus prevented what was foredoomed to be the tragic failure of inexperienced radicals to apply their impractical theories to the solution of a problem of which they know nothing. The decision to leave the cotton program in the care of informed men of honesty and integrity is one that brings a fully justified feeling of relief to this entire section.

There is no more dangerous delusion than that which seizes on certain highly emotional types of men and women to make them conclude that they are divinely appointed to remedy the ills of other people of whom they know nothing, whose manner of living and whose necessities are alike utterly foreign to their experience. The South has been particularly plagued and hampered by those who meddled and tampered under the flagrantly false assumption that their sentimentalism would make up for the intelligence and acquaintanceship the state of affairs demanded. Whatever Mr. Wallace can do to keep us from being visited with any more of the same will be most genuinely appreciated.

As a matter of fact, the leaders of the South today understand far more clearly than anyone else that changing conditions are creating certain inequalities and certain injustices for individuals who make up classes. Furthermore, they are concerning themselves to find and apply the remedies their knowledge of people and conditions indicates are best suited for the purpose. Planters have their own difficulties and their own limitations that must be considered and adjusted in company with the difficulties and limitations of tenants and sharecroppers. In the very nature of the case, the process will be evolutionary.

No sane person either supposes or claims that all landlords have been fair in their dealings under the rulings of the cotton program. On the other hand, a very great many landlords have not only been fair themselves but have also urged among the first the rigid curbing and control of those who were not. The thoroughly exasperating thing is that some parlor pink, or ignorant idealist, or sentimental agitator should draw an indictment against an entire class on the basis of experience with and testimony of the worst elements concerned in any given situation.

The example set in the AAA, incidentally, is one that could be followed with genuine profit in other departments of New Deal administration. The ultimate success of the program is conditioned by the number of men of practical knowledge and unquestioned ability and integrity who are entrusted with the administration of the government's participation in recovery.

The presence of able, willing and experienced cotton men in positions of key importance in the AAA has meant the creation of a considerable body of confidence in the feasibility of the cotton program and that confidence, in turn, has secured the co-operation of cotton growers.

It is to be believed that a general application of the same principle all up and down the line of the government's contacts with business would do more than anything else could to create that confidence that is so much talked of and so much to be desired. The New Deal is now in the stage of application rather than otherwise and in that all possible experience is needed.

# WALLACE EXEMPTS TWO-BALE FARMS

## Small Growers Will Not Be Required To Adhere to Bankhead Act.

WASHINGTON, March 7.—(AP)—Small farms producing two bales or less of cotton were exempted today by Secretary Wallace from provisions of the Bankhead production control act.

The administration recently announced the distribution of this quota among the various cotton states and declared today that county quotas will be announced within a short time.

Cotton producers were urged immediately to submit applications to community committees for their pro rata shares of the county quotas. Community committees after receiving such applications will make any necessary readjustments and submit the applications to the county committees for use in apportioning county totals.

Cully A. Cobb, director of the cotton division, was unable to say whether the two-bale exemption total would be taken out of state quotas before they are distributed among counties, deducted from state reserves, or subtracted from county allotments after they have been distributed.

"County allotments will be made as before without reference to the two-bale exemption," he said.

It was learned from other sources, however, that the number of bales necessary to cover the exemptions will be taken out of county allotments and state reserves in proportions to be determined after applications have been received in each county.

Officials declared they could not estimate at present the total number of bales which will be required for the exemptions. A study is being made of last year's applications for allotments to determine this figure but it was explained that the estimate would be somewhat inaccurate pending submission of 1935 applications.

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# SPEAKER PRAISES GRADY'S WISDOM

## Dr. H. C. Nixon, of Tulane, Says Noted Editor Sensed South's Problems

By JULIAN HARRIS.

Important in its implications and particularly interesting to Georgians, was the address at the Emory Institute of Citizenship Tuesday by Dr. H. C. Nixon, head of history and political science, Tulane University, on the background of southern economics and political problems.

Dr. Nixon revealed Henry W. Grady as one who not only led in progressive thought in the late eighties, but who sensed the complexities of the south's future and warned his people against a decadent agrarianism. What Grady feared and warned against was the danger of too many "croppers" with neither money nor credit.

That condition is at hand—it has been here for some time—said Dr. Nixon, who finds that it provides a fertile field for demagogues. Unprofitable farming caused a flow of the agricultural population to the urban scene, and in the past few years the somewhat artificial counter-movement has been unhealthy for the political trend of the south.

**Exposure to Demagoguery.**

Even more serious than the exposure of farmers to demagoguery is the plight of the tenant-farmer or share-cropper as a man helpless under the pressure of a tyrannical syster and hopeless that he will be able to overcome what are at present for him insurmountable obstacles, said Dr. Nixon. The effect of this is bad for the south as a whole, but worse for such states as Georgia, Alabama and South Carolina.

Next to Washington and Lee, said Dr. Nixon, the southerner whom he remembers first learning about and learning to admire was Henry W. Grady.

"Here in Atlanta," continued Dr. Nixon, "we behold a monument erected to his memory, but southerners, even Georgians, have forgotten the most important words of warning and wisdom uttered by Grady. Certainly they have failed to heed them."

Dr. Nixon then referred to an article by Grady in Harper's Magazine for October, 1881, on "Cotton and Its Kingdom." Grady observed that the trend of the civilization based on cotton culture was still "indeterminate"—that whether cotton "shall bring the south to independence or beggary" was an unsettled question.

**Reads Grady Excerpt.**

The following excerpt from Grady's article was quoted by Dr. Nixon:

". . . Whether its culture shall result in a host of croppers without money or credit, appealing to the granaries of the west against famine, paying toll to usurers at home, and mortgaging their crops to speculators abroad even before it is planted—a planting oligarchy of money-lenders, who have usurped the land through foreclosure, and hold by the ever-growing margin between a grasping lender and an enforced borrower—or a prosperous self-respecting race of small farmers, cultivating their own lands, living upon their own resources, controlling their crops until they are sold, and independent alike of usurers and provision brokers—which of these shall be the outcome of cotton culture the future must determine. . . ."

"Grady described and denounced the cropper-tenant system, the crop lien system with usurious interest, and the other agricultural ills of his day," continued Dr. Nixon. "His writings taken as a whole, call for a balanced agriculture, for independent farmers, and they call for a balanced economy between industry and agriculture.

"After half a century, what have we? Not what Grady hoped for, but a picture which his descriptions, of his day, would fit only too well."

Dr. Nixon asserted that at least three southern states, including Georgia, have percentages of farms operated by tenants rising above 60. Other states, he said, have tenant percentages of 40 and even 50, and most of the tenant-farmers are share-croppers or share-tenants.

**System of Semi-Slavery."**

Dr. Nixon then indicted this system of semi-slavery—not in words of burning eloquence but with devastating figures—when he said:

"The states with the highest percentage of tenants have the lowest rank as to the per cent by which they are self-feeding.

"A pre-depression study classed Alabama and South Carolina as 44 per cent self-feeding and Georgia one point below these.

"What would Grady say? I am reminded of the comment of an old woman at the monument of Robert Burns, 'He asked you for bread and you gave him a stone'."

What "Grady would say" is so obvious that Dr. Nixon did not put the reply in words. What "Grady would say" has been said by The Atlanta Constitution for 50 years. And even more vigorously in the past decade has The Constitution used editorial and news space and expended money to bring home to the farmers of Georgia, and the south, the imperative need of diversified crops in order that each farm may be self-supporting. Further, that through this diversification, the foodstuffs and feedstuffs raised in Georgia would take the place of the tremendous shipments from other sections. How far the tenant farmer and share-cropper situation prevents the achievement of this goal of self-support is a question. Evidently Dr. Nixon is of the opinion that the basic problem is the share-cropper and his type.

**Cites Colonial Economy.**

"On the industrial side," continued Dr. Nixon, "the south is also still too much in the stage of a colonial economy, turning out vast amounts of coarse goods, with low values added by manufacturing."

Dr. Nixon referred to Clarence Heer, who, in her "Income and Wages in the South," points out with a critical analysis how "souther wages always have been far below the national average, mainly because southern industries are of a class which does not employ highly paid labor anywhere."

"The south, I believe," said Dr. Nixon, "contributes only about 15 per cent of the value added by American manufacturing. One trouble with southern manufacturing is that it might take a train-load of too many kinds of our products to equal in value a wheelbarrow full of Swiss goods—watches, for instance. What would Grady say?"

**Losing "Farm Acres."**

Dr. Nixon sees as an important phase of conditions in agriculture, the heavy shifting of population between southern farms and urban or industrial centers.

"Several southern states lost farm acres in the 1920's to the extent of two or three million each," Dr Nixon asserts. "But since the deepening of the depression there has set in an attempted counter-movement to the farms because of urban unemployment."

Dr. Nixon thinks these folk movements and counter-movements have not been healthy for the political trend of the region. They have furnished, said the speaker, "most inflammable material for the demagogues to utilize and the demagogues have not been lacking."

Moreover, in Dr. Nixon's opinion the demagogues have strengthened their power "by finding some good things to do for the real benefit of the underdogs, things which might have been done before the arrival of the demagogues upon the scene but which were neglected by the 'good people.'"

Dr. Nixon did say there was no remedy for the serious conditions he discussed, for he doubtless had in mind that "when the gods arrive, the half-gods go."

# Cotton Empire Heads West Where Level Plains Permit Economical Mass Production

## Texas, Oklahoma Acreage Now Exceeds That of Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi—South Still Leads in Yield Per Acre

BY WILLIAM BENNETT

United Press Staff Correspondent

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Feb. 19.—King Cotton soon will abdicate his tottering throne in Dixie and move west of the Mississippi, R. J. Goode, Alabama commissioner of agriculture, predicted tonight.

In 10 years at the most, he estimated, western cotton states, particularly Texas and Oklahoma, will have completely overthrown cotton's traditional kingdom in the south and will be the cotton growing center of the world.

"Not that the southeast will decrease its production very much," he explained, "but the wetsern region is just opening up. It will soon overshadow the east."

He pointed out that during the past seven years, the combined cotton acreage of Texas and Oklahoma has increased by 8,794,000 acres, which is more than the entire acreage planted in all three of the traditional cotton states—Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi.

**Four-Row Plows**

"The south cannot compete with the advantages of the west," he said. "Its level prairies permit the use of huge four-row plows and cultivators, so that one man can tend 30 to 40 acres. In the south, the land is too hilly for those implements. One man, working a single row, can only handle about 10 acres.

"Again, the fresh prairie sod grows few weeds, eliminating the necessity of hoeing the cotton crop during its growth, which is the hardest, most expensive and time-consuming task the eastern grower has during the season."

He pointed out that the "mass production" methods of the west, although they put more acreage in cultivation, were partially offset by the south's intensive farming methods.

"By fertilizing heavily, Alabama farmers produce an average of 200 pounds of lint per acre, compared to 100 in the west," he said. "Western states never will be able to intensify their production because they lack sufficient rainfall to dissolve plant foods in the fertilizer and soak it into the soil."

**Forsees Boom**

Asked what would become of the tenant farmer and the negro cotton picker in the event cotton production declines, Mr. Goode said he thought less emphasis on the cotton industry would create the greatest industrial and agricultural boom in the history of the south.

He told of the city of Enterprise, Ala., which erected a monument to the boll weevel because the pest ruined the community's crop and forced farmers to diversify their planting. When the bottom dropped out of the cotton market, Enterprise farmers were saved from financial disaster because they had much corn and little cotton.

"However, the chemist will be the salvation of the south. Chemistry has discovered half a hundred ways to compound needed products from farm crops, and the agricultural south is the logical place for industrial plants to manufacture those things," he explained.

He mentioned the process of extracting starch from sweet potatoes, extraction of oil from cotton seed and soy beans by a new dissolving process instead of the old pressure methods; making acoustic and "wallboard" from sugar cane stalks, and newsprint from pine.

# Bankers and Brokers Warn of Critical Threat to Supremacy of American Cotton

By HAYNES McFADDEN,
Secretary Georgia Bankers' Association (in tme Southern Banker).

Necessity knows no law. The desperate straits of the south's necessity two years ago drove the federal government to subsidize destruction and to erect an artificial standard of value for American cotton. It is now time to call a halt upon such measures, which in the long run are as futile as forcing water to run up hill. Granting that 12c cotton has instilled into a sense of wellbeing, the great rank and file of southern cotton growers the tocsin of fast-following disaster is now sounding along the whole thinking front. The loss of the cotton export market spells certain disaster, not to the cotton belt alone but to the nation as a whole. Other commodities are involved with like consequences, but we are talking now about cotton only.

The emergency ceases to be an emergency and necessity ceases to be the law. We are plunged deeper in the eternal verities than makeshifts can pull us out. It was a lifesaver to the south when its cotton was geared up to an artificial price level. It has now become apparent that the artificial respiration must cease before it becomes a way of life. Nothing short of prompt and vigorous measures to enable American cotton again to stand on an equal footing in world markets can save the day.

Men with vision are of one voice, and vocal, in stressing this inevitable necessity to transcend the dictates of emergency. No other interpretation can be placed on the facts. From within and from without the same clear call is heard. In the limits of space available, we quote a few of the many calls to arms that have sounded during the present month:

New York Herald: "The persistence with which some of the New Dealers continue to believe in crop control as a sound policy is difficult to understand in sight of the many indications that the policy is leading straight ward ultimate disaster—especially in the field of cotton. The advocates of restriction must be hypnotized by a theory and blind to facts.

"What is completely incomprehensible is that intelligent persons in Washington can take seriously the suggestion that it will be possible to induce the rest of the world to join America in a world-wide cotton-control plan. The mere mention of such a possibility shows an unbelievable lack of comprehension of the factors involved. . . . We are, in brief, rapidly losing our foreign cotton markets, which before the depression took 60 per cent of our total cotton output. The restrictions have brought a temporary false prosperity to the south (largely through the outpouring of government cash), but are rapidly creating a situation which will mean ultimate disaster to that part of the country. . . . Why should Brazil, Egypt, India and other of the new cotton-growing countries be parties to an agreement which has as its prime purpose to help their American rivals, from whom they are rapidly taking much business?"

Thomas J. Caldwell, vice president Union National bank, Houston, Texas —"The last fact to which I would call your attention is that the present pitiful condition of agriculture in this country is not due alone to this depression, which has been simply the last straw needed to break the farmer's back. Agriculture had become impoverished long before this depression was dreamed of, by the constant increase in the cost of production agricultural products because of the artificially high cost of commodities needed in such production, through which the margin between the cost of production and the world market has been narrowed to such a point as that the farmer can no longer exist even on the low standard of living to which he had become accustomed. The A. A. A., the Commodity Credit Corporation, and the Bankhead act, which are bringing disaster to thousands of our people who are being thrown out of work, and which are inviting a permanent loss of our cotton markets through increased production abroad, are makeshift efforts, thoroughly unsound from every economic standpoint, to bolster up those who have so long been robbed by the protective tariff. These activities have been tolerated by the protectionists in the hope of avoiding, or at least of delaying, any material reduction in the protective tariff. Unless something more permanent than these is devised, agriculture will languish long after this depression has passed."

John H. McFadden Jr., of Geo. H. McFadden & Brothers, cotton merchants—"Suppose there had been no 12c loan this year, that the Bankhead act had provided for 12,000,000 bales, and that this amount of cotton had been produced. Would it not have been cheaper and better in the long run to have prorated among all the cotton farmers a fixed sum on every bale that was exported provided the market was below, let us say, 10 cents? This idea is not original and it is worthy of the most serious consideration. By such a plan we would have exported more cotton, avoiding to a large extent, the surpluses which are now piling up in the government's hands, we would have maintained the markets which had been ours for years, and substantially more labor would have been employed in the handling, transporting and shipping of cotton to foreign markets."

The American cotton producer is faced today with a very real threat which he can no longer afford to disregard. The past two years of high-priced cotton have acted like a narcotic and have lulled him into a happy state of security. It is not to be believed that this condition is permanent. Our government may continue the policy of crop control, loans, etc., for some time to come, but it can not continue such a policy indefinitely. The question which concerns every American citizen, especially the cotton farmer, is: What is going to happen when the load becomes top-heavy and the government is forced to abandon the present experiments? If this does not occur in the very near future, it will be too late. We will wake up some day to the fact that we have lost our export markets and that Brazil and other countries have supplanted us.

**For many years now, cotton has been in our country, "the goose that laid the golden egg." It seems inconceivable that we should now pat her on the back and tell her to fly away and lay her eggs somewhere else.**

## *Salvaging The Landless Farmers*

THE Federal cotton control plan caused the eviction of some thousands of landless share-croppers. These people, many of whom had never done anything in their lives but work somebody's land on a sharecrop basis, receiving for their share a bare subsistence, could not find work off the farms so they became subjects of relief. This arm of the government failed miserably to provide for the share-croppers that the cotton reduction arm put out of business.

So, a new problem was created. Now Senator BANKHEAD, who is author of the cotton control plan, comes forward with a plan for the redemption of the tenant farmers and share-croppers. Under his plan these people would be able to purchase with government loans the land they formerly tilled, with 30 years to pay the loans.

If put into effect such a plan would be a God-send to thousands of croppers who have been exploited all of their lives by the notorious landlord-tenant system that has prevailed in the southern states, a system that in recent years has reduced thousand of croppers to a condition little better than chattel slavery.

There will be many who have the physical and moral power left to embrace such an opportunity if offered by the government.

There are hundreds of others who are too ignorant and bereft of all initiative or power of self-sustenance to take advantage of the plan, if offered. These poor devils are victims of the *system* which took the place of slavery. They are so much human chaff that cannot be salvaged.

If the new BANKHEAD plan is carried through it will break the backbone of the hideous tenant-sharecropper system in the cotton belt. If that can be accomplished, it is sufficient justification for the adoption of the plan, even though it calls for the expenditure of a billion dollars by the government.

* * * *

Simultaneously with the Bankhead plan announcement Governors of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Tennessee and Kentucky were urged by the Southwestern Council, in session at Wilmington, (N. C.) to ask the government for $20,000,000 of the new PWA funds with which to raise standards of rural life, by replacing farm tenantry with home ownership.

There is only one element of doubt in the move on the part of the Southwestern Council of Agriculture, which is headed by Mr. HUGH MCRAE, of Wilmington. The Council suggests that the governors ask the Federal government that the local administration of the funds be left to the state governments, "the members of which understand and are sympathetic with local conditions."

Now everyone at all familiar with southern conditions knows what that means. It is an evasive, but purposeful way of saying that we will set up and maintain *two separate and distinct standards of living*—one for white the other for black—based upon the sophistry that it is necessary to keep the blacks living under a standard several degrees lower than the whites.

If, in the light of experience, of prevailing conditions, of prevailing public opinion, of actual state administration of laws, any other interpretation can be put upon the Council's suggestion we are open to conviction.

## Cotton Industry Better Without Agencies of U. S.

Editor Constitution: As far back as I can remember The Constitution has championed the cause of cotton. Mr. Grady proclaimed it "King," and it remained king until the advent of governmental interference with the natural laws of supply and demand. In 1929 the federal farm board came into existence and through its affiliation—the so-called Cotton Cooperative Association—pegged the price at 16 cents per pound. Since that time we have had these and other interests in cotton, supposed to be beneficial, but the record shows that we have had our lowest prices for cotton during the period which these interests have operated.

For your information, I beg to quote the actual price figures from 1917-1918 to date:

| | Crop. | Season Average. |
|---|---|---|
| 1917 | 11,302,000 | 29.02 |
| 1918 | 12,041,000 | 29.76 |
| 1919 | 11,421,000 | 38.34 |
| 1920 | 13,440,000 | 16.66 |
| 1921 | 7,954,000 | 18.09 |
| 1922 | 9,762,000 | 25.83 |
| 1923 | 10,140,000 | 30.14 |
| 1924 | 13,628,000 | 24.22 |
| 1925 | 16,104,000 | 19.68 |
| 1926 | 17,977,000 | 14.46 |
| 1927 | 12,956,000 | 19.72 |
| 1928 | 14,478,000 | 18.67 |
| 1929 | 14,825,000 | 15.79 |
| 1930 | 13,932,000 | 9.61 |
| 1931 | 17,096,000 | 5.89 |
| 1932 | 13,002,000 | 7.15 |
| 1933 | 13,047,000 | 10.81 |

The figures for this season are, of course, not yet available, but we all know that the price is far below what a less than 10,000,000-bale crop should bring.

I give you these figures in order to point out the pitiful showing that has been made by government agencies so far as price to the producer is concerned. You will note that even in the largest crop year in history (1926) the average price for the season was 14.40 cents per pound. Prior to 1929 the cotton business was handled by cotton merchants and there was widespread competition both at home and abroad. These cotton merchants and their staffs were trained in merchandising cotton and their efforts in the interest of American cotton extended to the four corners of the world. Today the cotton industry is in the hands of theorists who know nothing of the practical side of it. This situation has existed for the past six years, and one has only to look at our domestic consumption and exports of American cotton to realize the loss our nation (and the south especially) has suffered at the hands of these amateurs.

There is in Washington now a committee representing the Cotton Industries Employes' Association. Their purpose is to lay before the president the situation existing in the cotton industry and allied interests, and to endeavor to procure, through Mr. Roosevelt, a return to normal conditions by the elimination of government interference with an industry that has been paramount in the prosperity of the nation. This committee is composed of W. A. Wooten, of Memphis, Tenn., president of the Cotton Industries Employes' Association; C. L. Merritt, of New Orleans, La., vice precident of the association, and F. P. Lordan, of Houston, Texas, chairman of the Houston-Galveston division of the association.

The administration should give careful consideration to these gentlemen and their proposals. They are representing thousands of people who have been thrown out of employment and thousands more who will soon be out of jobs—men who do not want charity doles but honest work in the line in which they have spent their lives.

CHARLES W. LIVELY.
Greenville, S. C., March 15, 1935.

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# AGRARIAN TOILERS PREPARE NATIONAL FIGHT FOR RELIEF

## Will Hold Convention in Washington on Jan. 8-9
## Lay Plans for Uniting Rural Millions Ruined by New Deal Policies in the Countryside

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 6.—Stressing the need for unity and struggle against the New Deal policies, a call has been issued for a nation-wide conference of agricultural and rural small town workers throughout the nation to be held in Washington, D. C., January 8 and 9.

Pointing to the heroic struggles of the agricultural workers throughout the country in Ohio, New Jersey, California, Florida and to the development of hundreds of local organizations among the rural workers, the Conference call appeals to all agricultural workers in the fields, canneries and packinghouses, to the small town lumber and woodworkers, and to all workers in the rural communities and regions of the United States, to join together to plan for national, regional and crop programs of action and struggle.

In a statement issued today, the Organizing Committee for the National Conference of Agricultural, Lumber and Cannery Workers announced the opening of the Conference with a public meeting to be held at the Masonic Temple, Tenth and U Sts., N.W.

Okey O'Dell, president and nationally known Ohio onion strike leader of the A. F. of L. Agricultural Workers Union and Tom Crawford, president and strike leader of the Seabrook Farm Union in New Jersey, with other strikers will describe the conditions in their fields. H. S. Mitchell, president of the Arkansas Cotton Tenant Farmers Union and leader of the Alabama Sharecroppers Union will also speak. Jack Walker, Florida citrus worker; Joseph Payne, president of the Nebraska-Colorado Beet Laborers' Association; Benito Sanchez, president of the Rio Grande Fruit Workers' Union will be among the other speakers.

A. F. of L., independent, and T. U. U. L. unions and workers' organizations in over 20 States have already endorsed this Conference and are planning to send delegates.

Among these organizations are the Nebraska Beet Laborers Association, the Agricultural Workers Union Local 19724, A. F. of L., the Gulf Coast Sea Food Workers Union Local 763 of the International Hod Carriers Union, the Arkansas Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the Alabama Sharecropper Union, the Broom and Whisk Makers Union of Nebraska, the Independent Fishermen's Union of Gloucester, the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union the Rio Grande Valley Fruit Workers Union of Texas, and the Timber and Sawmill Workers Union, Local 19021, A. F. of L., Kimball, West Virginia.

All delegates and organizations should get in touch with the Conference Committee at the Atlas Building, Room 509, 527 Ninth St., N.W., Washington, D. C.

Pointing out that the Roosevelt New Deal has spread ruin and poverty among the agrarian toiling population, and that all attempts to wrest improved conditions for rural workers has been met with terrorism and suppression, the call lays down the following program for discussion at the convention:

"This Conference must discuss ways and means of combatting these conditions, of enabling us to unite our strength, of discovering how we can work together to strengthen our organizations, and of taking steps to secure the support of our allies, the city workers and the small farmers.

"Four immediate problems face us at the start:

"1. The problem of unemployment, adequate relief and insurance.

"2. The New Deal policies of the N. R. A. and the A. A. A. and the planning and development of programs of action so as to secure decent wage levels and living conditions.

"3. The problem of establishing co-operation on a local and national scale to secure united action of all existing groups and organizations in the countryside and small towns to aid each other in our struggles, in our defense work, and in mobilizing mass support during strikes.

"4. Preparations for the holding of regional and crop conferences to strengthen our existing organizations and to build new ones throughout the countryside and in the small towns.

"1. Elect delegates to the National Conference. Read this Call to your members at the first possible meeting of your organization; if possible, have copies made locally and spread them to all rural workers in your region.

"2. Inform us immediately of other organizations or individuals in your locality to whom we should send copies of this Call or with whom we should communicate in the future so as to develop this movement throughout the country.

# TENANT FARMER'S STRUGGLE IS CITED

## Weil Brothers' Letter Pleads For Better Conditions In South

In their semi-monthly crop letter, Weil Brothers, local cotton merchants with offices in Europe and throughout this country, make a plea for better living conditions among the one-horse or tenant farmers of the South. While the large cotton farmers are today enjoying their greatest prosperity in years, the tenant farmers feel this prosperity in much less degree and are barely able to make both ends meet, the letter sets forth.

"As a rule they live in wretched habitations—a condition that ought to be remedied," the cotton firm asserted. "This improvement in living conditions would assist greatly in bringing about a more permanent prosperity in the South."

Prospects for the cotton trade in 1935 are uncertain, Weil Brothers report. A problem has arisen, the letter went on, which will not be easy to solve. The letter in full follows:

"The cotton trade is at sea for the new year 1935. The least that can be said is that prospects are uncertain, especially as they affect cotton merchants or dealers. Their problem is not easy to solve. On the one hand they are handicapped by the limited amount of cotton offered for sale direct from farmers during the season 1934-35. This is attributable largely to the amount of cotton turned over to the Government under the 12c loan. On the other hand, merchants are deterred from selling the normal quantity of American cotton for exportation, because cotton using countries of the world have given preference to foreign growths, of the same intrinsic value, at prices ranging from 1-2c to 1 1-2c below American growths. The contention has been made that economic conditions and scarcity of dollar exchange are largely the cause of limited cotton exportation from the United States. That may be true to some extent, but cotton is a cash article wherever bought—whether in South America, India, Egypt or the United States.

"There is another picture: The Southern cotton farmers are exceedingly prosperous and the South's retail trade is reaping the benefit of this prosperity, which is confined mainly to larger farmers and landowners. The small farmers—the one-horse or tenant farmers—feel prosperity to a much less degree, being barely able to make ends meet. As a rule they live in wretched habitations—a condition that ought to be remedied. This improvement in living conditions would assist greatly in bringing about a more permanent prosperity in the South.

"For the moment there is little change in the basis. Domestic demand is in keeping with the season. It is spasmodic and the spinners of the United States are largely committed to a hand-to-mouth policy so far as buying cotton is concerned. Meantime, the domestic cotton goods markets are firm, and it is expected that the expansion of trade in the United States will improve the demand for cotton goods of all kinds beginning with the turn of the year. There is no perceptible increase in foreign demand.

"The weather during the major part of December was not propitious for farm work. It is reported that fertilizers will be higher and that sales prices of farm mules have advanced from 25 per cent to 50 per cent."

# NATIONAL LEADERS COMMEND RICE ON HIS COTTON STAND

## By ALBERT WHITE

Many Negro laborers and farmers in the South have been started on the road to ruin and poverty as a resut of the enforcement of the federal cotton policy, according to an avalanche of information pouring into the office of C. W. Rice, Houston labor leader and president of the Texas Negro Business and Laboring Men's Association which maintains offices in Houston.

Mr. Rice recently issued a vigorous attack on the cotton policy of the national government through the press. Since that time his office has been flooded with letters and comments from national publications, leaders of industries, statesmen and workers.

Publications of national repute which have carried editorials on his attack are the United States News of Washington, D. C., which quoted him at length in its issue of December 24, and the Texas Weekly of Dallas, which carried an extensive editorial on his views in its issue of December 1.

Mr. Rice declares that Southern Negroes who depend on production and export of cotton for livlihood face a dark future. He urges leaders and thinkers of the group to study the plight of the group and use their influence to bring about a change in the present policy of the federal government in handling the situation.

According to information which Mr. Rice has received throughout the South, plantation owners have refused to provide farmers with credit for foodstuff, allowing them to pay at harvest time as an old custom. Consequently, he has been told that many have been forced on relief rolls.

Insurance companies have advised him that Negroes in the farming regions are no longer able to keep up nickle and dime insurance policies; that those who own homes are losing them because they are

unable to pay taxes and that efforts to encourage garden planting are making little headway because Negroes in the past have found it difficult to secure their equal shares of free seed distribution.

Mr. Rice is championing for a change in the national cotton policy to enable America to retain its export markets. He is of the opinion that when this is done employment for Negro workers in the cotton industries of the South will be stimulated. He wants the president to change the duties so that living will be cheaper for the farmer. He wants the farmer to have the same standard of living as the factory worker in the North.

"Many of our race in the North feel that this issue is one which concerns only the welfare of the Negroes of the South," Mr. Rice points out, "but in this they are wrong. The economic security of the Negro is vital to the economic security of the nation as a whole. A breakdown in the cotton trade of the South will not only prove harmful to Negroes of the South, but will affect Negro workers in the factories and industries of the North."

Congressman-elect Arthur W. Mitchell, in a letter to Mr. Rice, said he would make a careful study of the situation. "I have a great deal of information on the cotton situation in the South, having lived there for many years and having served as principal of an agricultural school in that section," Mr. Mitchell stated.

Congressman Joe H. Eagle, of Eighth Congressional District of Texas, said in a letter that he would work to the end of improving the condition.

Numerous other letters have been received from chamber of commerce officials, white and colored business men, including a letter from Prof. J. B. Boyle, professor of rural economy at Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.; Dr. A. B. Cox, director of business research, University of Texas; Walter Parker of New Orleans, one of the nation's foremost authorities on economics of the raw cotton industry, as well as workers who have been thrown out of work.

# ASKS WITHDRAWAL OF 450,000 FARMS

## Land Committee Urges Restrictions Against Exploitation of the Soil.

## SUBSISTENCE UNITS HIT

## Group's Report Call for Integration of Rural and Industrial Employment.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11.—A broad and permanent national policy of integration of farm and industrial employment by establishment of homes for non-agricultural workers where they may produce part of their own living, was urged upon President Roosevelt today by the National Resources Board in a report by its Land Planning Committee.

The report called for a reversal of traditional methods through a public policy designed to end the rapid development and exploitation of land, and to effect such ownership as would best serve public welfare, rather than private advantage.

The report was the first of four prepared by the board headed by Secretary Ickes which has already advocated intelligent planning of the use of land, water, and mineral assets of the country and a rejuvenation of agricultural technique.

The second, to be given to the President tomorrow, will deal with "proper" use of mineral deposits.

The recommendation for decentralization of laboring populations, a policy with which the administration has already experimented, was amplified by the Land Planning Committee, which comprises M. L. Wilson, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, chairman; Charles W. Elliott 2d., Mordecai Ezekiel, economist of the Department of Agriculture; L. C. Grey, Oscar Chapman, W. G. Mendenhall, H. H. Bennett and Jacob Baker.

**Five Policies Recommended.**

The report advised:

1. Encouraging the location of industries, under proper conditions, in rural areas now seriously deficient in sources of income.

2. Reconstruction of existing rural industrial communications "which under laissez faire policies took the form of wretched homes huddled around a mine or factory."

3. Planning for the integration of agricultural and industrial employment in the case of relocating industries.

4. Encouraging the location of industries on the outskirts of large cities in definite relationship to rapid transit facilities to the countryside "as an important objective in city and regional planning."

5. Developing the program of public lands with the definite aim of integrating employment on public lands with employment in agriculture.

Basing its general recommendations upon its belief that our population will not increase materially and that land is bing destroyed by misuse and erosion, the committee advocated:

1. That the government withdraw from homestead entry and selective privilege all land unsuitable for occupancy.

2. That States having considerable bodies of unorganized public lands be encouraged to take similar steps to prevent the settlement of unsuitable areas.

3. That States pass adequate zoning enabling acts, as in Wisconsin, and encourage localities to apply these acts to areas unsuited for agricultural occupancy.

4. That States modify their grants in aid of education, roads and other utilities so that they may not stimulate unwarranted settlement of unsuitable areas.

5. That the government coordinate its credit and relief policies with a sound plan of land settlement in such a way as to discourage settlement of unsuitable areas.

6. That no substantial movement of unemployed people from urban areas into commercial agriculture be publicly encouraged.

**Would Withdraw 75,000,000 Acres.**

One of the outstanding types of maladjustment considered by the committee was that of submarginal land, and it recommended that 75,000,000 acres of farm land, comprising 450,000 farms, be withdrawn ultimately from arable farming "in order that both the natural and the human resources of the nation may be conserved."

This consists of about 20,000,000 acres of crop land, 35,000,000 acres of pasture and 20,000,000 acres of forest and wood land, waste and other lands.

The land to be retired may be added to the national forests, or leased to States for administration as wild-life refuges, parks and the like.

Control of soil erosion was stressed as a matter of major concern, the Land Planning Committee estimating that the "usefulness for farming of 35,000,000 acres has been completely destroyed, that the top soil has been nearly or quite removed from an additional 125,000,000 acres, and that another 100,000,000 acres are starting" in the direction of depletion.

**TO PROBE COTTON PROBLEMS**

Analytical discussion of the serious problems faced by every phase of the cotton industry is planned for a conference meeting today in Dallas, Texas, which will be attended by leading economists, businessmen and educators, all either directly or indirectly interested in cotton. The conference is called by the Institute of Public Affairs of Southern Methodist University, Dallas.

In discussing the conference, Dr. Myres, director of the Arnold school of government at the university, describes its purpose as follows:

It is our hope that we may, without political prejudice of any kind, plumb to the depths of this "cotton crisis" now prostrating the south. While discussion will cover all phases of the industry from land utilization to distribution and sale of the crop, it is expected that experts will concentrate largely on international phases, recommending such steps as tariff revision, settlement of war debts, and currency stabilization to restore world markets.

The conference should be of unusual value in presenting the views of the cotton growers on the western side of the Mississippi. Their problems are, in many respects, different from those faced by the growers in the older cotton-producing states on this side of the Mississippi. Several of the proposed solutions that would benefit the western interests would spell almost certain ruin to those of the older cotton states.

It is to be expected that the western viewpoint will be thoroughly aired at the Dallas meeting, since most of the speakers are from Texas and Oklahoma. They include Dr. J. T. Sanders, agricultural economist of Oklahoma A. & M. College; W. L. Clayton, cotton exporter of Houston, and Dr. Aldon Lang, Baylor University economist.

These speakers, and the others who will appear on the program of the two-day conference, are intimately familiar with the various ramifications of the cotton trade. The presentation of their views, even though they may not coincide with those of cotton leaders in this section, should be both interesting and beneficial.

**THE TARVER COTTON BILL**

The appeal by Representative M. C. Tarver, of Georgia, for consideration of amendments to the Bankhead cotton act is aimed at the elimination of discriminations from which the small producer suffered last year.

The Bankhead bill contains many good and effective provisions, but its application last year developed the fact that some of its features worked great harm to the small producers. Governor Talmadge and other southern leaders took issue particularly with the clauses that penalized the small farmer.

Especially was this true in the case of the farmer who, as the result of the appeals in the past for reduced production, had cut his acreage. The Bankhead bill worked a hardship on those farmers who had voluntarily endeavored to improve cotton conditions in the past, while at the same time the act unfairly benefited those farmers who had selfishly refused to cut their production in former years.

President Roosevelt realized that modification of the measure was needed and last year while in Georgia issued an executive order exempting farmers raising two bales or less from the taxing provisions of the Bankhead act.

Representative Tarver is to be warmly commended for the earnest effort he is making to bring about such changes in the act as will protect the small farmer from this discrimination. The minimum of two bales should be increased in order to further protect the small farmer from the discrimination imposed by the law as it now stands.

It is fortunate that so able and experienced a member of congress as Representative Tarver is leading the fight for what is simple justice to many thousands of southern farmers. He should have the earnest support of every representative from the cotton-producing states.

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# South's Last Line of Defense In Competition With Foreign Cotton Lies in Improved Staple

## Spread of One-Variety Movement Gives Promise of Disappearance of Low-Grade Cotton in Georgia.

By E. C. WESTBROOK.
State Leader in One-Variety Community Cotton Production, Athens, Ga.

The south's last line of defense in the battle with foreign nations for supremacy in the world's cotton markets lies in the grade and quality of the staple produced. The security of the old days when the south was for all practical purposes the exclusive source of supply of the world's cotton is gone forever.

Since 1931 Georgia farmers have initiated a plan of growing cotton which promises not only to meet competition of foreign production, but appears to be a very effective challenge to that part of the cotton belt west of the Mississippi river. Although Georgia mills consume annually about the same amount of cotton as Georgia growers produce, they have in recent years been forced to obtain a large part of their requirements from the western part of the cotton belt.

Before the advent of the boll weevil, Georgia, especially north Georgia, had the reputation of producing high quality cotton. After the boll weevil made its appearance in Georgia a large number of inferior varieties of cotton were introduced, and within a few years Georgia had lost her reputation of quality cotton. If Georgia continues to make the progress she has in the last five years, it will not be long until Georgia will be producing better cotton than she has ever produced in the years past. In our opinion, within less than five years' time the Georgia mills will be supplied almost entirely with locally-grown cotton.

The factor which is bringing about an evolution in Georgia's cotton production is the plan whereby all of the farmers in a community agree to grow only one superior variety of cotton. This plan was initiated in Georgia in 1931 with the organization of three communities. In 1934 the number of one-variety communities had increased to 45. In 1935 about 25 additional communities have been organized, bringing the total to 70 one-variety communities in about 50 counties.

### Mounting Profits.

In 193 approximately 90,000 acres of cotton were grown in the one-variety communities, on which about 43,000 bales were produced. The staple of this cotton was 1-inch to 1 1-16 inches and brought an average premium above short cotton of $3 per bale. This represents an increased value to the one-variety farmers of $130,500. Farmers estimated that the improved seed produced 50 pounds of lint per acre more than the seed they formerly used, or an increase in value, due to the good seed, of $6.75 per acre, or a total of $607,500. The total increase in value, due to premiums on better staple and to increased yield from the use of good seed, was $738,000, which represents extra profit which the farmers received that they would not have received if it had not been for the one-variety community plan. The extra profits ranged from $5 to $10 per acre in the various communities, and in some counties amounted to as high as $60,000.

The indications at the present time are that approximately 250,000 acres of cotton will be grown in one-variety cotton communities in 1935. All of these communities except three are located in the northern half of the state. Up to date the cotton breeders have not developed a superior variety of cotton which is wilt-resisting that has become popular enough with south Georgia farmers to be suitable for one-variety community production.

In the middle part of the state, the counties of Lamar, Upson, Spalding, Pike, Clayton, Fayette, Butts, Coweta, Monroe and Henry will be 90 per cent to 95 per cent one-variety. This will make possible production of a considerable volume of 1-inch to 1 1-16-inch cotton, which should be very uniform in quality and spinning value. Mill tests of cotton grown in one-variety communities in Georgia have shown that it compares favorably in every way with western cotton. It is the only plan we know of which will enable the small farmers of Georgia to produce a large volume of cotton which will be just as uniform as western cotton.

Lamar county was the first county to declare themselves to be on a county-wide one-variety basis. With the assistance of the county agent, A. J. Nitzschke, the local paper, the Barnesville News-Gazette, on March 1 issued a six-page one-variety supplement edition, which is the only publication of its kind we know about.

Bees and other insects will mix cotton in the fields. If more than one variety is ginned on the same gin the seed will be mixed at the gin, unless special care is used to prevent it. Some communities go in 100 per cent on a one-variety basis the first year, but many communities begin on a part-time basis. The ginner sets aside certain days of the week for ginning the adopted variety and the other days of the week are used to gain other varieties. Usually by the end of the first year communities are able to obtain a sufficient amount of seed to plant the communities solid the second year.

Where the one-variety plan of growing cotton is not used the seed usually run out quickly, but where all the farmers in the community grow the same variety of cotton the quality and yield are maintained for an indefinite period. For example, in the Orchard Hill community, where most of the seed planted last year was three to four years from the breeder, the United States grade and staple report shows that out of about 1,500 bales ginned on the Orchard Hill one-variety gin, 99 per cent of the cotton staple was 1 inch or longer; 20.5 per cent of the cotton was 1 inch; 39.4 per cent 1 1-32 inch; 32.7 per cent 1 1-16 inch; 6.3 per cent 1 3-32 inch. This report is in line with results usually obtained from seed direct from the breeder. This would not have been possible if the cotton had not been grown in a community where no other kind of cotton was grown, and ginned on a gin where no other kind of cotton was ginned.

The use of good varieties in the one-variety communities has made available large quanties of seed at a reasonable price for supplying other one-variety communities. Farmers are requested not to try to make extra profit from the sale of seed. We have pointed out that the benefits to be derived from the one-variety plan will come from the increased yield and from the premium on better quality cotton. The farmers have co-operated splendidly in this respect.

### Federal Aid Received.

Fifteen of the one-variety communities received the federal grade and staple service last year. Every bale of cotton on 15 one-variety gins was classed as to grade and staple by a federal cotton classer. This service enabled the farmers in those communities to sell their cotton to much better advantage than they would otherwise have been able to do.

A number of communities last year placed on each bale a special tag designating it as cotton produced in a one-variety community. A number of communities are trying out this plan to help them establish a reputation for the production of extra quality cotton.

To give some very definite idea as to how the one-variety plan of growing cotton is bringing about the improvement in quality of the Georgia staple, government reports may be cited. According to reports of the United States department of agriculture, 42.8 per cent of Georgia's 1934 crop was 15-16 inches and longer, as compared with 27.8 per cent for 1933 and 10.5 per cent for 1929.

The one-variety to the community plan of growing cotton has been indorsed by the Cotton Manufacturers' Association of Georgia, the Georgia Press Association, the Georgia Bankers' Association and others.

The one-variety to the community plan of growing cotton is under the direction of the agricultural extension service, State College of Agriculture, Athens, Ga., represented by E. C. Westbrook and R. R. Childs; the United States bureau of plant industry, represented by C. A. McLendon, with headquarters in Atlanta, and the Georgia experiment station, represented by R. P. Bledsoe. The one-variety communities are under the direct supervision of county agents and other local agencies.

Of the 70 one-variety communities which have been organized, 50 of them adopted the Stoneville No. 2 variety; nine Coker's Farm Relief; seven D. & L. 4-8; two Coker's Cleve-wilt; one Acala, and one Qualla. These are all good varieties with ability to make large acre yields, and have a staple which runs from 1 inch to 1 1-16 inches.

The one-variety to the community plan of growing cotton has been demonstrated to be the most practical plan for producing uniform quality cotton that has yet been devised. It is a good plan regardless of what form of crop control is in effect. Farmers and others interested in growing cotton who have not had an opportunity to become familiar with the plan and the results that are being obtained would find it well worth their while to visit some of the one-variety communities this year, and talk with the farmers in those communities and find out first-hand how Georgia is making a very rapid comeback in the production of quality cotton.

# South May Turn To Trade If Cotton Cultivation Fails

(This is the fourth and concluding article of a series dealing with the question: "What About Cotton?")

BY WILLIAM G. GAUDET
(Copyright, 1935, by Universal Service)

NEW ORLEANS, La., March 24.—Any review of the cotton problem now confronting the south, of its own brings up another subject—one of utmost importance to Dixie, and of immeasurable significance to the entire country.

Briefly this subject resolves itself into this:

"If cotton fails in the south, what then?"

For an answer, if an answer is possible to such a titanic question, one must study what other peoples have done when necessity has changed their economic status, bearing in mind, for its full significance, the estimated figures that 20 millions of persons, directly and indirectly, derive their living from the cotton industry.

Of late the South American republic of Brazil has figured prominently as the greatest menace to the south's cotton empire. It was not always this way. In 1931 Brazil produced a bare 392,000 bales of cotton, while the south produced 13,873,000. During that year Brazil's great product was coffee. Soon coffee began to pile up its surplus. Soon there developed no ready market for coffee. There isn't a favorable market today for coffee. So Brazil has turned to cotton, and the 1934-35 estimates place Brazil's cotton crop at 1,100,000 bales—an increase over 1931 of over 100 per cent.

As Brazil gradually turned from one product to another for economic advantages so may the south swerve from cotton into other fields.

And those other fields? It is difficult to forecast such an eventuality if ultimately it does come.

Brazil turned to cotton because it possessed the climate and the soil indigenous to its cultivation.

Today the south buys industrial products from one section of the United States and agricultural products from another. Hence she is today a customer of these various sections. But easily she might become competitor, especially if economic necessity forces the issue.

She has all available labor for industrialization and has the climate for the cultivation of other agricultural products which today she holds in light regard.

And in these economic ventures the south possesses favorable possibilities.

Industrially she holds the edge because of low wages. In this—even now, and cotton has not collapsed—a migration of the chimneys has started.

Even if complete industrialization of Dixie never eventuates, the industrial north will lose a most valuable customer if king cotton fades into oblivion.

This slight advantage that the southland maintains over the industrial north is more than doubled over the agricultural middle west. The chief edge—and one of

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Regardless of what the future may hold, one thing seems sure—the south has enjoyed a short growing season, the south definitely has awakened, and, aside from political concepts of revision almost south has a climate which makes that term, there has been a new deal for cultivation of farm products there in the south.

From a leisurely people, happy year round.

The south may never become industrialized, nor may it ever compete with the agricultural middle west, but it produces an economic question that ultimately must be considered.

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In the middle part of the state, the counties of Lamar, Upson, Spalding, Pike, Clayton, Fayette, Butts, Coweta, Monroe and Henry will be 90 per cent one-variety. This will make possible production of a considerable volume of 1-inch to 1 1-16-inch cotton, which should be very uniform in quality and spinning value. Mill tests of cotton grown in one-variety communities in Georgia have shown that it compares favorably in every way with western cotton. It is the only plan we know of which will enable the small farmers of Georgia to produce a large volume of cotton which will be just as uniform as west-ern cotton.

Lamar county was the first county-wide one-variety basis. With the assistance of the county agent, A. J. Nitzschke, the local paper, the Barnesville News-Gazette, on March 1 issued a six-page one-variety supplement edition, which is the only publication of its kind we know about. Bees and other insects will mix cotton in the fields. If more than one variety is ginned on the same gin the seed will be mixed at the gin, unless special care is used to prevent it. Some communities go in 100 per cent on a one-variety basis the first year, but many communities begin on a part-time basis. The ginner sets aside certain days of the week for ginning the adopted variety and the other days of the week are used to gain other varieties. Usually by the end of the first year communities are able to obtain a sufficient amount of seed to plant the communities solid the second year.

Where the one-variety plan of growing cotton is not used the seed usually run out quickly, but where all the farmers in the community grow the same variety of cotton the quality and yield are maintained for an indefinite period. For example, in the Orchard Hill community, where most of the seed planted last year was three to four years from the breeder, the United States grade and staple report shows that out of about 1,500 bales ginned on the Orchard Hill one-variety gin, 99 per cent of the cotton staple was 1 inch or longer; 20.5 per cent of the cotton was 1 inch; 39.4 per cent 1 1-32 inch; 32.7 per cent 1 1-16 inch; 6.3 per cent 1 3-32 inch. This report is in line with results usually obtained from seed direct from the breeder. This would not have been possible if the cotton had not been grown in a community where no other kind of cotton was grown, and ginned on a gin where no other kind of cotton was ginned.

The use of good varieties in the one-variety communities has made available large quanties of seed at a reasonable price for supplying other one-variety communities. Farmers are requested not to try to make extra profit from the sale of seed. We have pointed out that the benefits to be derived from the one-variety plan will come from the increased yield and from the premium on better quality cotton. The farmers have co-operated splendidly in this respect.

**Federal Aid Received.**

Fifteen of the one-variety communities received the federal grade and staple service last year. Every bale of cotton on 15 one-variety gins was classed as to grade and staple by a federal cotton classer. This service enabled the farmers in those communities to sell their cotton to much better advantage than they would otherwise have been able to do.

A number of communities last year placed on each bale a special tag designating it as cotton produced in a one-variety community. A number of communities are trying out this plan to help them establish a reputation for the production of extra quality cotton.

To give some very definite idea as to how the one-variety plan of growing cotton is bringing about the improvement in quality of the Georgia staple, government reports may be cited. According to reports of the United States department of agriculture, 42.8 per cent of Georgia's 1934 crop was 15-16 inches and longer, as compared with 27.8 per cent for 1933 and 10.5 per cent for 1929.

The one-variety to the community plan of growing cotton has been indorsed by the Cotton Manufacturers' Association of Georgia, the Georgia Press Association, the Georgia Bankers' Association and others.

The one-variety to the community plan of growing cotton is under the direction of the agricultural extension service, State College of Agriculture, Athens, Ga., represented by E. C. Westbrook and R. R. Childs; the United States bureau of plant industry, represented by C. A. McLendon, headquarters in Atlanta, and the Georgia experiment station, represented by R. P. Bledsoe. The one-variety communities are under the direct supervision of county agents and other local agencies.

Of the 70 one-variety communities which have been organized, 50 of them nine Coker's Farm Relief; seven D. & L. 4-8; two Coker's Cleve-wilt; one Cleve-wilt; one Acala, and one Qualla. These are all good varieties with ability to make large acre yields, and have a staple which runs from 1 inch to 1 1-16 inches.

The one-variety to the community plan of growing cotton has been demonstrated to be the most practical plan for producing uniform quality cotton that has yet been devised. It is a good plan regardless of what form of crop control is in effect. Farmers and others interested in growing cotton who have not had an opportunity to become familiar with the plan and the results that are being obtained would find it well worth their while to visit some of the one-variety communities this year, and talk with the farmers in those communities and find out first-hand how Georgia is making a very rapid comeback in the production of quality cotton.

# South May Turn To Trade If Cotton Cultivation Fails

(This is the fourth and concluding article of a series dealing with the question: "What About Cotton?")

BY WILLIAM G. GAUDET
(Copyright, 1935, by Universal Service)

NEW ORLEANS, La., March 24.—Any review of the cotton problem now confronting the south, of its own brings up another subject—one of utmost importance to Dixie, and of immeasurable significance to the entire country.

Briefly this subject resolves itself into the question: "If cotton fails in the south, what then?"

For an answer, if an answer is possible to such a titanic question, one must study what other peoples have done when necessity has changed their economic status, bearing in mind, for its full significance, the estimated figures that 20 millions of persons, directly and indirectly, derive their living from the cotton industry.

As Brazil gradually turned from one product to another for economic advantages so may the south swerve from cotton into other fields. And those other fields? It is difficult to forecast such an eventuality if ultimately it does come.

Brazil turned to cotton because it possessed the climate and the soil indigenous to its cultivation.

Today the south buys industrial products from one section of the United States and agricultural products from another. Hence she is today a customer of these various sections. But easily she might become competitor, especially if economic necessity forces the issue.

She has all available labor for industrialization and has the climate for the cultivation of other agricultural products which today she holds in light regard.

And in these economic ventures the south possesses favorable possibilities.

Industrially she holds the edge because of low wages. In this—even now, and cotton has not collapsed—a migration of the chimneys has started.

Even if complete industrialization of Dixie never eventuates, the industrial north will lose a most valuable customer if king cotton fades into oblivion.

This slight advantage that the southland maintains over the industrial north is more than doubled over the agricultural middle west. The chief edge—and one of

Regardless of what the future may hold, one thing seems sure—the south has definitely awakened, aside from political concepts of revision almost as tremendous as that caused by the great western

Under this, if necessity does force competitor status of precipitate economic

From a leisurely people, happy with the sheer joy of living, the South has evolved into a section vitally aware and cognizant of the swirling economic life which surrounds it.

The south may never become industrialized, nor may it ever completely from the agricultural middle west, but it produces an economic question that ultimately must be considered.

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Of late the South American republic of Brazil has figured prominently as the greatest menace to the south's cotton empire. It was not always this way. In 1931 Brazil produced a bare 392,000 bales of cotton, while the south produced 13,873,000. During that year Brazil's great product was coffee. Soon coffee began to pile up its surplus. Soon there developed no ready market for coffee. There isn't a favorable market today for coffee. So Brazil has turned to cotton, and the 1934-35 estimates place Brazil's cotton crop at 1,100,000 bales—an increase over 1931 of over 100 per

While the middle west enjoys only a short growing season, the south has a climate which makes for cultivation of farm products the year round.

# Cotton Production Control Termed Economic Suicide

(Editor's Note: This is the second of a series of articles dealing with the question, "What About Cotton?")

BY WILLIAM G. GAUDET

(Copyright, 1935, by Universal Service)

NEW ORLEANS, La., March 22.—Coupled with the south's intricate problem of "what to do about cotton" comes the broadside leveled by cotton experts from New York to New Orleans, charging that Brazil is America's greatest and most dangerous potential competitor.

These experts, dangling the Brazilian menace before the cotton producer, believe the way to solve the problem is through increased production and not through crop control by the Bankhead bill.

One cotton expert today used Brazil to emphasize his statement that the cotton farmer in accepting present benefits offered by the federal government is committing "economic suicide."

This assertion becomes grave as the expert, Walter Parker, economist for a large brokerage house here, added the statistical declaration that 20,000,000 persons in the south directly and indirectly obtain a livelihood through the cultivation and marketing of American cotton.

**Slump Affects Nation**

A slump then in this principal industry will have a tremendous effect on the entire United States, bearing in mind that Dixie, decidedly not an industrial center, buys products from the middle west, the east and the far west.

First asserting that cotton is primarily an export commodity, Parker then objects to the crop control plan, accompanied by its 12-cent loan, on the grounds the method makes for hoarding and a damming of the natural channels which would otherwise lead to stimulation of the export market.

The decrease in exports is more than emphasized by the figures for the first half year of the 1933-34 season as compared to those of 1934-35.

Exports—1933-34, 4,919,000 bales; 1934-35, 2,865,000 bales.

To stimulate the export trade and at the same time aid the American farmer Parker suggests:

"Were the government to give the farmers in cash the difference between 12 cents and the sales value of such cotton, the farmer would then sell for export. He would get the same amount of money and would hold his markets, which under the hoarding impelled by the 12-cent loans, he is rapidly losing."

**Hoarding Aids Brazil**

The "hoarding" of cotton, he adds, has been one of the chief factors contributing to Brazil's marked expanse of cotton cultivation. This method, by which the government will soon have nearly 6,000,000 bales, has acted as a restraint to free trade and has, as a consequence, presented Brazil with a marvelous opportunity to sell its cotton, Parker added.

The views expressed here represent the opinions of those who believe the chief task is to re-create a world market for American cotton, and leave the question of price to the natural course of free trade, rather than attempting to "peg" it through government assistance.

(Tomorrow's article reviews the opinions of those who believe crop control has no reflection on foreign consumption of American cotton.)

ton producers is not only the effect of price on cotton exports but the effect of price on the man who grows the exported cotton," Mr. Cobb explained.

**Illustrates Point**

One of the most outstanding illustrations of the sacrifice which producers make during a period when exports are expanding on the basis of price alone occurred in the three-year period from 1923 to 1926, inclusive, Mr. Cobb added.

In that period, farmers received $128,000,000 less for 10,927,000 bales of cotton in the 1926-27 season than for 5,656,000 bales of export cotton in the 1923-24 season.

Producers not only received less money for the 1926-27 exports but they had less land on which to produce food and feed crops, and they were put to the additional expense of producing, harvesting and marketing the additional 5,500,000 bales of cotton.

**Control Boosts Price**

"During this period the United States succeeded in increasing exports of cotton but did so at the expense of the American cotton grower," said Mr. Cobb. "The grower not only received less money for growing more cotton but he increased the supply of American cotton in foreign markets and added to the total burden of surplus which continued as a price-depressing influence.

"In the two years in which the cotton program has been in effect, the price has increased from an average of 6.5 cents per pound to an average of more than 12 cents per pound. Our total carry over of cotton is expected to be about 6,000,000 bales smaller at the end of the present marketing season than it was at the beginning of the cotton program and the carry over should be still further reduced under the provisions of the 1935 program."

BEAUMONT, TEX.
ENTERPRISE
APR 2 1935

# FARM WELFARE GUARDED BY AAA

## Profitable Cotton Prices Is Integral Part Of Control Program

*By United Press.*

MONTGOMERY, March 27.—Out of the discussion concerning cotton exports has come an important decision as to policy by the United States Department of Agriculture in Washington. It is, in sense, that the welfare of cotton producers is the paramount issue, leaving exports and other problems secondary to this.

"It is highly important that we continue to make every effort to expand cotton exports, but at a price at which farmers can afford to produce it," says Cully A. Cobb, director of the cotton division of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, a former cotton grower and Southern farm journal editor.

"We are producing and will continue to produce all the cotton that can be sold at a fair price, both on the domestic and foreign markets. The important problem before cotton producers is not only the effect of price on cotton exports but the effect of price on the man who grows the exported cotton," Mr. Cobb explained.

**THE INCREASE OF LAND TENANCY**

At a hearing before a subcommittee of the senate committee on agriculture and forestry Secretary of Agriculture Wallace said: "During the past half-century the increase of farm tenancy has been one of the undesirable and yet widespread characteristics of rural America." The aim of creating an agricultural system composed largely of land owners who worked their own farms was a laudable one, but ran into economic difficulties, of which the worst effects are now experienced, particularly in the south.

Failure to safeguard permanent ownership of the "family-sized" farm gave the speculative "land-grabber" an opportunity to get possession of a large part of the country's virgin soil. The ideal of rural democracy, of an "earthly paradise" is that of a family secure on its acres and independent economically. In early America the pioneers and lawmakers dreamed of a condition that would permit every man to sit under his own vine and fig tree, if he so desired. In 1880 the disagreeable discovery was made that more than one-fourth of the nation's farmers were no longer land owners, but had become tenant farmers, "in spite of homestead and other liberal land laws," a quotation taken from a recent report made by the land planning committee of the National Resources board.

"In 1930," Mr. Wallace said, "about 53 per cent of our farmers operated leased land, and 42 per cent of them rented all of the land which they operated. The forces of depression appear to have increased this proportion, so that today it is estimated that not less than 45 per cent of all our farmers are tenants." In no other part of the country are the evil effects of land tenancy worse than in the south. Contrary to popular belief, most southern tenants are not negroes, but whites. According to the 1930 census, of the 1,800,000 tenants and croppers in 16 southern states, less than 40 per cent were negroes. Negro tenants and croppers actually decreased between 1920 and 1930, but during that decade the number of white croppers increased by 69 per cent.

However, the plight of the negro farm tenants is worse, if anything, than that of the whites, although there is little to choose between negroes and whites. Both live in economic bondage to one landlord or another, which they will never break, to the end of time, if the present system continues. Nor should all the blame be placed on landlords. The fault lies mainly in the system, which encourages waste, incompetence and shiftlessness. Through generations of economic dependence on the landlords many of the south's farm tenants have become virtually incapable of taking care of themselves. They are like children, looking to their landlord for the necessities of life, for food, clothes, shelter and whatever medical attention they receive, which is little or none a good deal of the time.

It has been said that such people are not worth saving. In addition to being cruel, this verdict ignores certain fundamental facts. It overlooks for one thing, and this is most important, the fact that a large number of farm tenants were once farm owners, reasonably prosperous and contented. The attitude of almost any human being will change when he ceases to be a property owner and becomes an economically depressed tenant. Conversely people who have never owned land before will in a good many instances become more industrious, more thrifty when they acquire land. Self-interest is a powerful motive. The farm tenant who may move every year has no interest in the soil he cultivates for another, has no incentive for trying to preserve its fertility or for taking care of the other property of his landlord.

# TENANTS' INTERESTS TO GET CONSIDERATION

ATHENS, Ga., April 15.—(AP)—The interests of tenants and sharecroppers will be given particular attention in the checking of producers' compliance with 1935 cotton production adjustment contracts, Harry L. Brown, director of the state agricultural extension service, has announced.

He said compliance will be checked before the second rental checks are sent out.

Certificates of compliance with provisions of the 1935 contract will be made again this year by county committeemen. The facts are checked by the committee but full responsibility for performance rest with the contracting producers, Brown said.

Retention this year, in so far as possible, of the same number of tenants and other employes on a farm under contract as normally are on the farm is one of the provisions of the contract that must be met before a certificate of compliance will be issued, Brown explained.

Agriculture—1935
Condition of.

General.

# DISAGREEMENT ENDS COTTON CONFERENCE

Commercial Appeal

## Second Meeting Called For Birmingham

4-11-35

## DATE SET AS APRIL 22

Memphis,

**All Parts of Industry To Be Represented At Sessions—Delegates In Accord On Many Matters**

BY KENNETH TOLER

From Jackson, Miss., Bureau of The Commercial Appeal

JACKSON, Miss., April 10.—Unable to agree here on a permanent cotton control program, designed primarily to regain lost foreign markets, agricultural leaders and representatives of all branches of the industry in the belt voted early today to continue negotiations April 22 at Birmingham, Ala.

A middle group on which the varied schools of thought might meet will be the objective of the Alabama session, to be presided over by Commissioner Harry D. Wilson of Louisiana, and to be attended by picked delegates from the 18 cotton growing states.

**Split on Problem**

The session here continued into the early morning this morning with the final decision left to the five commissioners of agriculture in attendance. The commissioners also split on whether to continue the present control and pegged price program or adopt a domestic consumption and unrestricted production for world markets.

The delegates to the Alabama meeting will be selected as follows:

One farmer from each state, to be selected by mass meetings; representative of the American Cotton Co-operative Association; National Ginners' Association; National Cottonseed Producers' Association; extension directors; American Cotton Shippers' Association; warehouse interests; textile institute; one agricultural editor; Southern Cotton Shippers' Association; transportation interests; cotton industries employes' group; Staple Cotton Association.

**Agree on Points**

Before adjourning the first session at which representatives of all interests involved in the holding of cotton, from farmers to spinner, the group approved a report detailing agreement having been reached on the following controversial points:

1. That the farmer must be protected to an extent no less than protected now under emergency cotton program.

2. Tariff benefits are highly inequal, forcing farmers to buy in protected markets and sell in open markets.

3. That farmers should have some kind of compensation corresponding to tariff.

4. Cotton producers cannot go on producing cotton in excess of ready market in as much as 40 per cent of cotton normally is exported and attention must be given to the protection of export

5. Agricultural adjustment act is beneficial and should be continued (Commissioner Tom Linder of Georgia voted against inclusion of this topic as having been unanimously indorsed).

6. Memorialized Congress to pass bills calling for donation of 500,000 bales of cotton on hand by government to Red Cross, sale of cotton by net weight and development of new uses of cotton.

The highly controversial questions of acreage restriction and continuance of the processing tax were not included in the list.

# DRASTIC CHANGES IN COTTON LAW URGED

## Shippers, Ginners And Spinners Present United Front At Jackson

Commercial Appeal

JACKSON, MISS., April 9—(AP)—Shippers, ginners, spinners and processors of cotton today presented a practically united front in urging drastic changes in the Bankhead cotton control act as a South-wide conference called by Southern commissioners of agriculture debated proposed revisions here.

The clamor for modification of the Bankhead act to permit unrestricted production of cotton "in order to compete with foreign markets, and save the cotton trade" reached such heights at times during the spirited afternoon debate that personalities were injected into the fiery floor battle on one occasion.

Representative of the farming interests expressed satisfaction with the Bankhead act, though admitting that some of its "imperfections" might be altered.

4-10-35

Five State commissioners of agriculture with Commissioner Harry D. Wilson, of Louisiana, presiding, heard the cotton trade leaders express opposition to Government production restrictions in an open forum discussion of problems confronting the industry.

Chairman Wlson said that every branch of the industry, including spinners, shippers, cotton oil men, compresses, exporters, warehousemen, cooperative associations, agricultural officials — authorities and producers, was represented at the meeting.

Indications pointed to a continuation of the meeting tomorrow with the possibility that committee work might last "for several days" before a definite program is assembled from the multiplicity of proposals offered on the floor.

Commissioner of Agriculture J. A. McDonald, of Texas, favored lifting of the bars of restricted production as proposed in a bill by Congressman Dies of Texas, with parity price-fixing for home consumed cotton and unlimited production of cotton for the foreign market. This plan would peg home-consumed cotton prices at least 10 cents per pound with tariff protection benefits to the American farmer from foreign grown cotton.

"There are three inseparable facts that indicate the seriousness of the situation facing the American cotton market," said MacDonald. "One is that our exports last year didn't get a consumer's dollar for his cotton; and third, five and one-half times as much gin machinery was sold abroad last year as in the year before.

"The Dies bill," he said, "sets up a protective tariff for agriculture and establishes a production basis, but not controlled production."

Dr. Tait Butler, editor of The Progressive Farmer, of Memphis, defended the Bankhead act and said he saw no reason for "such alarm."

Dr. Butler declared that the cotton farmer of the South was better off today "by far than he was two years ago, and there is none to deny it. Powerful influences are being brought to bear to defeat the purposes of the Bankhead act. There has been an avalanche of propaganda sent out from New York with that in mind; but restricted production is necessary if farmers are to receive anything like fair prices for their cotton crop."

C. G. Smith, of Blytheville, Ark., who said he voiced the views of the farmers themselves, asked for a continuance of the Bankhead act in its present form, and declared that the spinners and shippers were opposed to it because it restricted their profits.

Commissioners of agriculture present, in addition to Wilson, Holton and McDonald, weer Tom Linder, of Georgia, and Seth P. Storrs, of Alabama. Paul A. Porter, executive assistant to AAA Administrator Chester Davis, and Lawrence Myers, chief of the cotton marketing section of the AAA participated in the conference.

## COTTON'S CRISIS

In a comprehensive review of the causes leading to the crisis faced by the cotton textile industry, L. M. Forbes, secretary of the Cotton Manufacturers' Association of Georgia, in a communication appearing elsewhere on this page, makes the frank statement that the industry is facing certain bankruptcy unless relieved of the burdens that have made profitable operation impossible.

Citing the major increases in operation expenses resulting from the textile code, the first to be signed by any industry; the destructive effect of the processing tax; and the disadvantage to which the southern mills are placed by the inexcusable freight differentials granted eastern manufacturers, Mr. Forbes expresses grave concern "for the welfare and the happiness of the thousands of Georgia cotton farmers and their families and the 60,000 Georgia cotton mill workers and their families, and for the preservation of the enormous investments in lives and in resources which have been made in the cotton growing and manufacturing industry in this state."

This threat is laid directly at the door of "certain legislative and administrative policies which have proved to be economically unsound, and which are beyond the control of those whose interests are directly involved."

The continued urgency of New England manufacturers that the wage differential in the textile code under which the minimum in the south is placed at $13 a week and at $14 in the east, be abolished, is convincingly answered by Mr. Forbes in the clear statement showing that, under existing conditions, the lower scale in the south represents greater revenue to the operatives and larger cost to the mills than the high scale does to the eastern mills.

Constitution 4-13-35

The critical condition faced by the textile mills as the result of increased production costs and growing foreign competition is reflected in the announcement that the Slater Mill of Webster, Mass., the second oldest cotton mill in the United States, has quit operations for good.

The following report, published in a Boston newspaper, succinctly tells of the fate that has overcome a manufacturing company with a long record of prosperous and progressive business:

WEBSTER, Mass.—With notification given to salaried employes of the Slater Company mill that their services will be dispensed with in two weeks, the announcement was also made that the mill will not resume operations.

It has been closed since a week ago Friday, when the management shut down after refusing to grant a demand of the United Textile Workers for 20 per cent increase of pay for Slater operatives.

The mill before it closed down had on its pay rolls 550 men and women.

This is the second New England mill to close its door permanently because of inability to operate profitably under existing conditions.

Numerous mills both in the east and the south have been forced to close temporarily, and the New England group has issued formal warning that if relief is not extended wholesale shut-downs will result, throwing thousands of operatives out of work.

The cotton industry, as regards both production and processing, is at the most vital crossroads in its history. The domination of world markets by American cotton is now seriously threatened by increased production in other countries and

the textile manufacturers are unable to compete successfully with foreign-made materials, even in the markets of this country.

If general collapse, with disastrous results to the entire recovery program, is to be avoided, some means must be found to eliminate the evils that have brought about the crisis, and which are so clearly and forcefully presented in Mr. Forbes' comprehensive review.

**SPARTANBURG, S. C.**
**JOURNAL**

MAR 26 1935

## For Aid of Tenant Farmers

That Bankhead bill which has for its object providing a plan whereby thousands of destitute, impoverished farmers of the tenant class can own their farms on long time and easy terms should be enacted into law. The tenant farmer is one of the tragic problems to be solved in dealing with agriculture and its rehabilitation. He is the forgotten man. This proposed law would make thousands of acres of farming land available, to be apportioned off and sold in small farms to tenant farmers, who while working the soil would have the hope and encouragement ever facing them of sometime owning their own home and farm. The plan is practicable, and if not permitted to be spoiled by politics, would work immeasurable benefit to the poor farmers of both races.

The high rate of tenancy is customarily thought to be among the colored people, but such is not the case. Those who look upon it largely as a "negro" problem have not the correct grasp of the situation. As the Charlotte Observer says: "Sixty-one per cent of the South's tenant farmers are white men—1,091,000 white, 698,000 colored. During the nineteen-twenties the number of white tenants increased 200,000, due to loss of farms by foreclosure and otherwise. Meanwhile the number of negro tenants actually decreased slightly because of cityward migration."

**ROCKY MOUNT, N. C.**
**TELEGRAM**

MAR 30 1935

## The Blight Of Tenant Farming

If the Federal Government works out a program enabling tenant farmers in this State to buy their lands and to work out their independence, it will have made the greatest contribution possible for the Government to make to this rich section. And until the vast majority of the population is independent of tenant farming, until this system is left for the sluggards and the inane, we shall not achieve from farming what is possible to be achieved.

Statistics dealing with the number of tenants in the State are staggering. The Charlotte Observer quotes them to show the need in this State, and in all states in the South for that matter, for a new leadership. The Observer says: "In North Carolina there are 142,093 farmers who own and manage their own farms while alongside of them are 137,613 tillers of the soil who are tenants, owning neither land upon which to expend their energies nor the roof over their own heads.

"Breaking up these aggregates, it is found that there are 122,359 white owners and managers and 80,476 white tenants: 19,734 Negro owners and managers and 57,137 tenants.

"Virtually three times as many Negroes are tenants as land owners, but the greater curse of tenancy in this commonwealth is among the whites who constitute a third more of the total tenant class of the State than the Negroes.

"This is not a new situation, but it remains a challenging problem.

"Instead of dissipating, the issue is becoming more and more complex as land ownership decreases and farm tenancy increases in such a State as North Carolina which can offer such advantages and inducements to diversified farming and, therefore, profitable occupation on the lands as few other States can boast.

"And with all of these opportunities and invitations for self-improvement comes, also, the chance for tenants to break loose from the fetters of their accursed status as tenants and become independent, landowning citizens.

"The Observer submits that whatever may be done now by the National political leadership to lift the agricultural classes of America from the doldrums inflicted by the economic collapse, however efficacious may be the temporary nostrums applied and policies adopted, agriculture will never be redeemed to its rightful stage in North Carolina and our civilization will never be purged of some of its basic ills and evils until the situation is cleared up.

"The pall of tenancy that hangs over this State is not only as a cloud drooping its shadows over the social aspirations and attainments of our people, but it is an unhealthy state economically in which nearly 50 per cent of a rural population own nothing but their half-hearted energies.

"The solution of it, of course, is difficult—probably more harassing than any similar dislocating phase of our American economy—but it calls for the best and most immediate efforts and actions of our National leadership not only, but of the most dynamic and achieving thought of our own commonwealth.

"Tenancy not only is growing apace in North Carolina but in the whole country, a phase of the present agricultural picture altogether disconcerting, if not alarming."

So, if the Federal Government and the State would contribute to the stability and the progress of Eastern Carolina, where the heart of tenant farming lives and beats, means would be provided by which men who are tenants and who have capabilities to manage their own lands could have that opportunity.

**WASHINGTON, D. C.**
**TIMES**

APR 25 1935

# BANKHEAD BILL SIDETRACKED IN SENATE

Bowling over Administration leaders, the Senate yesterday sent back to committee the Bankhead bill creating a new Government corporation to lend $1,050,000,000 to persons desiring to buy farms. The vote was 45 to 38.

While the Senate instructed its agricultural committee to report back a revised bill by May 12, there was doubt it would reach another vote this session.

After the Senate sidetracked the Bankhead bill, Senator Costigan (D.), of Colorado, moved to take up the Costigan-Wagner antilynching bill, thereby starting another bitter fight in which a filibuster by Southern Senators appeared certain.

When Senator Costigan gained the floor to demand immediate action on his bill, Southern Senators left the chamber. Mr. Costigan in a one-hour speech quoted Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson and the U. S. Supreme Court on the need for Federal force to curb "mob" justice.

The Southerners will be back in force today to launch a filibuster or support a motion to table the bill.

Organizations representing 53,000,000 citizens, including many in the South, have indorsed the bill, Senator Costigan said, arguing sectionalism was not involved. Within the lifetime of most Senators, he said, 5,071 men and women, including 1,400 whites, have been lynched.

Senator Borah (R.), of Idaho, succeeded in recommitting the Bankhead bill after the Senate had twice voted down similar motions by close margins.

Designed to enable the share croppers and tenant farmers to buy farms, the bill would give them up to 60 years to repay the loan.

Democrats joined Republicans in assailing the bill as a step toward State socialism, class legislation and "dangerous" in its possibilities. Senator Borah thundered:

**"You are going to have a national disgrace at the end of this appropriation."**

General

Agriculture - 1935

Condition of

# Experts Look to Government In Solving Cotton Problem

(Editor's Note: This is the third of a series of articles dealing with the question: "What About Cotton?")

3-24-35

BY WILLIAM G. GAUDET

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NEW ORLEANS, March 23.—Fully cognizant of the drop in cotton exports this season, and equally aware something must be done to aid the south's principal industry, many experts believe the way out lies through the present federal government program.

And in this opinion, the south's two million farmers, in overwhelming majorities, substantiated them by voting for the continuance of the Bankhead Act calling for government crop control.

In so voting for this program, and other government projects, the south's cotton farmer believes a concentration of efforts to accelerate the price of cotton through limited production rather than through increased production will restore prosperity.

While advocating a boost in the price, and for the moment holding exports in some disregard, the farmers, and their opinions correlating those of many economists, believe that campaigns should be renewed to increase the domestic consumption of raw cotton.

To this end it has been advocated that low grade cotton be used for bagging to wrap the bale instead of jute which is now imported from India. At present, jute is used for two reasons. First, because it is cheaper, and second because it is heavier. And, since cotton is sold on gross, rather than on net weight basis, the heavier material is to the advantage of the producer.

Spasmodically in various sections of the south there have been movements to make women more "cotton conscious" to stimulate consumption. Though the movement has not been particularly concentrated, it has given impetus to the establishing by many department stores of "cotton shops."

Of those who believe in crop control none is more sold on the idea than Sam Bass, assistant general manager of the American Cotton Co-operative Association.

Of the opinion that production must be reasonably balanced with demand, Bass said:

"Statistics do not indicate that foreign production is influenced by the size of the crop in the United States.

"In 1921 we produced only 7,900,000 bales of cotton and in 1922, 9,700,000 bales...yet we exported a larger percentage of these two crops than we did of the three preceding crops.

"Our exports have decreased this season, but you will have to look for something other than crop control to determine the cause...however, one reason for decreased exports is 'parity' or 'price relationship.'

"In point—during the week of Dec. 8, 1933, American cotton was quoted at 11.20 per pound, while Brazilian...was quoted at 11.42 per pound—22 points higher than American. Now...one year later, American was quoted at 14.48 per pound and Brazilian at 13.90 per pound—58 points lower than American. This is a change of 80 points in price relationship in favor of Brazilian cotton."

(Tomorrow's concluding article discusses the subject of "What Next If Cotton Fails?")

# Part-Time Non-Farm Work Urged for Southern Growers by Federal Body.

Constitution

3-24-35

## Maladjustments in Land Use Revealed in Survey of Appalachian Region

WASHINGTON, March 22.—(AP)—The "basic problems" of the southern Appalachian region were described today in a report published by the department of agriculture as growing out of "maladjustments" in land use and in relation of population to land."

The report was prepared by federal and state economists and sociologists, who for three years have studied the area, principally of Georgia, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina and Tennessee.

"Tangible adjustments in the utilization of the land cannot be effected," the investigators reported, "unless there is a planning agency vested with powers and resources sufficiently to cope with actual problems."

It was suggested that "two major lines of adjustment involve a combination of part-time farming with employment in forests and forest industries and a combination of work in mines with employment in forests or in adjacent local manufacturing plants or part-time farming."

**Church Ratio High.**

The report said small-scale farming had been dominant in a large part of the region from the time of the first white settlers, and that the small, strictly mountain farms usually return "little more than a bare living for the farm families which often number six or more persons per household."

One investigator wrote that "nutritionally adequate diets would materially raise the level of living in this region."

"A great many churches" were found, which, if evenly distributed, "would only be 2.3 miles apart. . . . There were 3 1-4 churches per 1,000 population," a ration larger than for the United States as a whole.

The region surveyed covered more than 55,000,000 acres, one-third larger than all of New England. From 1900 to 1930 the number of persons living in incorporated places increased by 1,045,714, or 220.3 per cent, and the number outside such places by 27.3 per cent.

**Taxes High.**

A chapter on variations in farm-family living read:

"New roads and new schools have been built, and new contacts with other parts of the country have become possible. In certain parts the influence of Berea College and of some of the settlement schools has operated to improve conditions greatly, and at the same time to preserve cultural continuity.

"In some communities many products of the arts and handicrafts of pioneer days survive as evidence of a well remembered past, while in other furniture and decorations of modern types have almost entirely superseded earlier patterns. . . . Many of the families of this region live in the comfort of well-ordered and well-equipped farm homes."

A study of taxes of the region led to the conclusion "real estate taxes are high, and except during the present depression, their movement has been sharply upward."

It was found that, as in other parts of the country, schools of the southern Appalachians were "poor in some respects or in some communities and good in many others." In many counties a considerable number of children were found unable to read and write and in mountainous sections, fairly large areas were without schools.

**OUR LANDLESS MULTITUDES**

There has been no more outstanding lesson of the five years of depression than the realization that not until America again becomes a nation of home owners can there be attained conditions of social security that will guard against repetition of the widespread distress that has existed in every section of the country since 1929.

Already earnest thought is being given by the government to the devising of methods by which home ownership will become more general in the United States. Outstanding among the leaders in the movement is Representative John J. McSwain, of South Carolina, who for months has labored, both in his home state and in Washington, to bring about a greater public recognition of the urgent need for the rebuilding of the security of the American family, and the recreation of ambition through broadened home ownership.

Under the leadership of this able member of congress, outstanding representatives of the business and farming interests of South Carolina recently met in the capitol building in Columbia and adopted resolutions addressed to the federal government in which it is urged that in the expenditure of the $4,800,000,000 work-relief appropriation special attention be given to the construction of useful and socially valuable projects that would tend to increase farm ownership, among the suggested projects being soil erosion control, waterpower development, rural electrification, farm diversification, farm marketing centers and practical and common-sense instruction.

Representative McSwain has energetically urged the wisdom of these recommendations in speeches on the floor of the house and has conferred at length with Secretary of the Interior Ickes.

Leaders of thought in every state in the Union should take the same aggressive steps in order that the evil of farm tenancy, which has been largely responsible for the decrease in home ownership, may be lessened.

The 1930 census shows that 53 per cent of all American families are renters—with Georgia ranking at the bottom of all the states in home ownership, only 28.9 per cent of its population living in dwellings they own.

Of the white farmers of the state, 98,636 are tenants and only 70,055 are owners, while among the negro farmers there are 75,636 tenants and 11,158 owners—or a per cent of 68.2 tenancy among the combined white and negro farmers.

Farm tenancy has steadily grown during recent years, chiefly because of crop failures, decreasing exports the boll weevil and other causes that have contributed to the disappearance of farm profits. In the south one out of every ten farm families is now on the relief rolls.

In order to make these families again self-supporting and to make it possible for them to own their own farms, a bill has been introduced by Senator Bankhead calling for the creation of a $100,000,000 corporation, with a bonding capacity of $1,000,000,000, for the purpose of financing the purchase of farm homes.

The plan, if adopted, would not only bring sweeping reductions in the tenant farmer class, but would enable former farm families who are now among the unemployed of the cities to purchase, on long terms and low interest, small farms and equip them with the necessary stock and implements. It is described by Senator Bankhead as "a practical plan to restore landless multitudes to independence, self-support and better citizenship through land ownership."

Certainly this is an opportune time for a return to the farm of millions who during the boom days

flocked to the industrial centers. The government recognizes now, as never before, that the prosperity of the country is based on the well-being of its agricultural classes, and farm life is steadily becoming more attractive as the result of the work of agricultural engineers, foresters, soil chemists and other specialists in rural life.

Heretofore the farm had little to offer to youth, but the boys and girls who are now coming along can expect security, comfort and opportunity for profits in a career in agriculture.

America needs a major back-to-the-farm movement, not only in order that the unemployment situation may be relieved, but that it may again become a nation of home owners, instead of tenants and renters, as it has largely grown to be within recent years.

The need for increased home ownership is strikingly emphasized in an address of the late Dr. E. C. Branson, of the University of North Carolina, in which he says:

Civilization is rooted and grounded in the home-owning, home-loving, home-defending instincts. . . . Ownership of land tethers a man to law and order better than all the laws on the statute books. . . . Sooner or later America will have to reckon with her landless, homeless multitudes.

No greater good for the well-being of every American, whether urban or rural resident, can be accomplished than through the successful culmination of the efforts of Representative McSwain, Senator Bankhead and the other far-sighted leaders who are devoting themselves to the improvement of rural conditions in the country.

## LONG-STAPLE COTTON

It is constantly becoming more generally realized that the rapidly diminishing demand for American cotton in the world market can best be overcome by the production of long-staple high-grade cotton, which we once produced and can again.

Experts of federal and state governments, agricultural colleges, experiment stations and progressive county farm agents have recognized this necessity and are now co-operating on a constantly increasing program to establish one-variety communities in Georgia and other southeastern states, in each of which all farmers plant a long-staple, high-grade variety which has been selected by experts as best suited to the soil and climatic conditions of that particular section of the state.

In an enlightening and comprehensive article on the opposite page by E. C. Westbrook, Georgia cotton expert and state leader in one-variety community cotton production, it is pointed out that before the advent of the boll weevil Georgia, and particularly the northern part of the state, was famed for its excellent cotton, which was eagerly sought by spinners who gladly paid a premium for it because of its long staple and high-grade fiber. During the years when the boll weevil was wreaking havoc in this section, Mr. Westbrook shows that a large number of inferior varieties were introduced, and within a few years Georgia lost her reputation for the production of quality cotton.

The same thing happened in other southeastern states, and our one time supremacy in the world market began to be lessened by the severe competition of other cotton countries which were flooding the market with the same class of goods.

The one-variety cotton community came into existence in Georgia in 1931 with the organization of three communities. In 1934 Mr. Westbrook states that this number had increased to 45, while in 1935 there will be 25 additional communities added to this number, bringing the total to 70 in 50 counties. Ninety thousand acres of cotton were grown in one-variety communities last year, and 43,000 bales were produced, and it is estimated that premiums paid to these farmers increased their receipts $738,000, extra profits ranging from $5 to $10 per acre. In some counties the bonus for high-grade staple mounted as high as $60,000.

In middle Georgia this year 10 counties will be 90 to 95 per cent one variety, and, according to federal reports, 42.8 per cent of Georgia's 1934 crop was 15-16th-inch and longer, as compared with 27.8 per cent for 1933 and 10.5 per cent in 1929. These facts give a definite idea as to how the one-variety plan is bringing about improvement in grade and staple of Georgia cotton.

Fifteen of the one-variety communities received federal grade and staple service last year, and Mr. Westbrook asserts that if Georgia continues to make progress at the same rate as during the past five years, it will not be long until the state will be producing better cotton than ever before. When this is brought about in the several southeastern states, and the federal government puts its power behind high-density gin compression and the production of an improved bale for export, then American cotton will move forward to its former domination of the world market and the southern cotton farmer will reap the rich reward due his progressiveness.

More good cotton and less poor cotton should be the slogan on every cotton farm in the south.

LOUISVILLE, KY.
COURIER JOURNAL
MAR 4 1935

## *EFFICIENCY HITS THE COTTON FIELD*

The late Dr. Lyon Gardiner Tyler president emeritus of William and Mary College, besides being a son of President John Tyler, was distinguished also as an educator, genealogist, and the possessor of a peculiar bitterness toward Abraham Lincoln whom he often attacked in privately printed pamphlets and letters to periodicals. Dr. Tyler had one theory about slavery, however, which had an element of soundness. If Lincoln had not freed the slaves, he said, that institution would have met its death in a peaceful manner. He wrote that there was an agency at work which promised to displace slavery, that being McCormick's reaper, which proved an immense stimulus for the development of many labor-saving agricultural implements, calculated to render hand labor useless and expensive.

The reaper itself affected only the wheat-growing regions, however, and most of the improvements in agricultural methods seem to have passed the Old South by. Gang plows and cultivators hauled by tractors can only be used on the flat "black lands" of Texas; the States east of the Mississippi, with their rolling and hilly lands, must still depend upon the Negro and the mule. But east or west of the Mississippi, the picking of the cotton crop has depended entirely, ever since the first fields were cultivated, upon black labor, slave or free.

If slavery existed today, however, its foundations would be rocking. Indeed, a great social problem faces this and the next generation, for mechanical cotton pickers have been perfected which seem certain to displace hand labor, and then the question must arise: What is to become of the 4,000,000 tenants and farm laborers whose chief labor is at cotton-picking time?

Visitors to the Century of Progress World's Fair probably recall the big machine displayed in the agricultural building which was said to be able to displace from sixteen to forty-eight hand pickers, depending upon the yield and condition of the crop. Another has been demonstrated at the Delta Experiment Station in Mississippi which by test has picked more cotton in seven and one-half hours than is picked by a good hand picker in an entire season of three and one-half months. The machine may pass over a row as often as desired without injury to stalk or unopened bolls. The picking apparatus is a series of rotating smooth wire spindles which pull the cotton from the burr, whence it is delivered automatically to a container.

Already Southern California, Arizona and New Mexico, where fine long staple cotton is grown and where labor costs are high, are planning putting machine pickers to work and eventually they must spread to Texas. If the Old South can utilize the automatic picker, probably it will continue to grow cotton; otherwise not. For even the cheapest labor, as other industries have discovered, cannot compete with the machine.

## MISUSE OF LAND IN SOUTH

After three years study of conditions in the Appalachian region of the south a group of federal and state economists and sociologists report to the Department of Agriculture that the "basic problems" of this territory "grow out of "maladjustments in land use." The area studied lies principally in Georgia, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina and Tennessee.

The same problem exists to greater or lesser degree in every section of the United States, but its existence is more inexcusable in the south than anywhere else because of the millions of idle acres bordering these mountain areas.

Thousands of farm families are eking out miserable existences on the rocky hillsides of southern mountains while abandoned farms dot every southern state. On these fertile farms those who are tilling the barren soil of the mountain regions can find less arduous labor and greater profits and the repopulation of the farms will react to the benefit of the communities in which they are located.

The mountain farms of the south should be taken into park and forest reserves in order that reforestation can replace the trees destroyed since the coming of the white man. The Appalachian region is the great watershed of the southeastern section of the United States and the restoration of its forests will bring back to life thousands of springs and small streams that once helped feed the rivers that wind their way to the Atlantic and the gulf.

The report of the economists relates that the small mountain farms usually return "little more than a bare living for the farm families which often number six or more persons per household." The existence of such farms, when millions of acres of rich lands are lying idle in the same states, is both economically and socially unsound, and the correction in this maladjustment of land use would bring far-reaching benefit both to the mountainous and lowlying sections of the south.

## *Comparative Figures Show How American Cotton Is Losing World Domination*

Editor Constitution: During the 13 years prior to the government's entry in the cotton business, through the Federal Farm Board, 166,028,000 bales of cotton were produced, and the average price for this cotton was 22.42 cents. (The lowest average price was for the 18,000,000-bale crop of 1926-27—14.40 cents.) During the past four years, with the different government activities, 57,077,000 bales were produced, and the average price was 8.21 cents. During this latter period the surplus as represented by the carry-over, increased from 6,187,000 bales to 10,746,000 bales.

I am attaching a memorandum which will give you an idea of how American cotton has suffered at the expense of foreign cotton. Figures for the current year are, of course, not yet available, but we do know that the American crop is about 3,000,000 bales under last year (and incidentally the second smallest crop since 1899) and that the foreign crop is just about the same as last year.

If the Department of Agriculture is to function in the interest of the entire cotton industry, a clearer understanding must be had, and if some of the pet theories of the officials charged with the administration of the program have, after a trial of two years, been found inadequate and unserviceable, the promise made by the president when he asked for these laws that if they proved unworkable he would be the first to admit the error, and seek other means should be carried out.

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C. W. LIVELY.
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Agriculture – 1935
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# A Portrait of Today's American Negro Is Drawn in Washington

Daily Worker 6-1-35 New York, N.Y.

By MARGUERITE YOUNG

By Marguerite Young

(Daily Worker Washington Bureau)

WASHINGTON, May 31.—The portrait of today's American Negro—unemployed to the number of around 4,000,000, cutting clothes from fertilizer sacks on the farm and feeding on cornmeal until his gums inflame like a horse's, harrassed in town to the extremity of a day's work for carfare, lunch and an old dress, threatened with lynching for writing a letter to Washington; and yet daring to struggle, to march and die in the picket lines—this portrait was drawn here in two kinds of language.

The national conference, held here recently on the position of the Negro in the economic crisis combined scientific papers piling one official figure upon the other, with statements by workers and farmers themselves, carrying the dead certainty of "this happened to me." It is hard to say which was more moving. One thing is sure. The blend produced something unprecedented in the annals of the race whose reactionary leaders long have been given to substituting talkfests for deeds.

This conference, sponsored by the Joint Committee on National Recovery and the social science division of Howard University, resolutely faced the fundamentals of the problem. Though it could not take action, many of its delegates afterward joined in a move toward action. They formed a committee to plan a National Negro Congress to adopt a minimum program of action.

This—united Negro and white mass action—was almost unanimously agreed upon as the one hope. The difference between immediate and final mass action was recognized also; one after another speaker declared that in the capitalist scheme of things there can be no complete liberation of the Negro or his dispossessed white brother, that the road to freedom is the revolutionary way to Socialism. There were voices of reaction. However few, even among the official New Deal government speakers contended they offered a final solution.

There were 150 registered official delegates from 19 states. They represented 50 Negro organizations ranging from the National Federation of Colored Farmers and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, to the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., and the National Urban League and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The Roosevelt government Departments of Agriculture, Labor, Commerce and Interior sent official delegates appointed by the Secretaries and including some of the "Black Cabinet." White workers, farmers and professionals were represented also, by delegates from such groups as the Inter-Professional Association, the Sharecroppers and the Tenants Unions of the South, the Y.W.C.A.

Here, then, are some angles of the picture presented—a picture of the age-old oppression of the Negro people, the exploitation of him even more grossly than the white masses, stepped up at every point by the New Deal until, as T. Arnold Hill of the Urban League said, "If the present trend continues, there is slight question that Negroes will be gradually forced into a condition of economic peonage every bit as devastating as plantation slavery ever was."

### Negro Debt Slavery Shown

More than half of the 12,000,000 Negroes are in agriculture in the South. Census figures and Department of Agriculture studies cited by a Joint Commitee study for the conference show what this means.

Of the 1,813,173 Negroes listed in agriculture by the 1930 census, 87 per cent were agricultural workers, sharecroppers or other non-cash tenants, existing at best in the debt slavery of the "furnishing" system. And "casual day labor means the usual wage of 50 cents a day received over a maximum of 90 days a year," the study said. Then came the A.A.A. with the Bankhead Bill's cotton reduction program. The study continued: "Reduced acreage means a still lower standard of living, for the average "furnish" is figured by the acre rather than according to family needs. . . . During the work season the sharecropper who 3 years ago had $20 monthly for food and clothing, etc., now has only $12 to $15 . . . Meanwhile, the price of necessities has risen about 25 per cent." The reduction program "has driven from 250,000 to 500,000 farm tenant families out of commercial production. To this should be added another 100,000 agricultural wage workers who will no longer be needed to help chop and pick the South's cotton and work in the tobacco fields." The Mary Connor Meyers report for the A.A.A., the suppression of which was the signal for unleashing the landlords' terror in Arkansas, pictured scenes "like those of refugees fleeing war-torn Belgium," and reported evicted farm families wandering hopelessly while hovels of homes crowded until there was "standing room only."

Nor are mortgaged small owners and "standing-renters" better off. Many are farm owners and managers in name only, and, said John P. Davis, executive secretary of the Joint Committee, they have been subjected to wholesale fraud." Few have ever seen the government cotton checks, which are pocketed by creditors or landlords.

But the conference glimpse of the farm Negro of the crisis is incomplete without the testimony of the croppers and tenants. One Negro farm woman from Alabama reported, "The A.A.A. has boiled us down lower and lower. . . . We would like to know whether the government checks is black or blue or white or what." She told how the landlords corraled the farmers and instructed them to vote for the Bankhead Bill, how "things is much worse since they stopped using fertilizer in 1928" and consequently there are no sacks from which to make clothes. It was a farm owner who was threatened with lynching for communicating with his national government. These stories and the exciting process of building the unions, will be reported later more fully.

### $4 Weekly Average in Norfolk

One-third of all Negro workers, more than 1,500,000, are in domestic son, chief of the Women's Bureau and personal service. Mary Anderon to the conference some "graphic of the Roosevelt government, passed reports" concerning them. In Philadelphia, "women are glad to get $7 and $8 a week." In Norfolk, Va., the "average" wage is $4 for a 6½ day week of 14 hours a day, with $1.25 carfare coming out of the wage. Noting N.R.A. effects, Miss Anderson remarked that only 10 to 15 per cent of the Negro women still employed are included under wage and hour standards of any kind. A new study of the N.R.A. laundry code's working brought to light the washer-women toiling for a bit to eat and a rag to wear. Yet, admitted Miss Anderson, average earnings did not sink to the "exceedingly low limit of $5.60 set by the N.R.A. laundry code."

On behalf of Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, a letter was written recently to a Brooklyn domestic worker. This woman had written the President's wife of her plight.

Clifford McLeod, chauffeur and head of the Domestic Workers' Union, Local 149 B, Brooklyn, (A. F. of L.) stood on the conference platform and read the answer written for Mrs. Roosevelt—read it as an example of why Negro and white workers must organize. It said Mrs. Roosevelt "regrets" the difficulty but "is not placed in a position to be of direct assistance," and added:

"There is no code in existence, Mrs. ——, which applies to domestic workers. None is contemplated. . . The intimate relationship existing between the mistress and the domestic employee are such that they could not very well be subjected to any set of rules or regulations. . . However. . . Mrs. Roosevelt, as well as recovery executives, have pleaded with housewives. . . Of course you will realize that domestic employees are in effect members of the household. . . The greater the individual household's income, the better wage its domestic employees will receive. This, as you will no doubt see, hinges on business prosperity. We are happy to inform you that the country's business levels are growing better. . . it is quite possible your present wage difficulties will automatically adjust themselves.

Shaking a bony hand, McLeod satirically underscored the frankness with which the writer expressed brutal approval of the "intimate relation," suggesting the domestic must accept being virtually a chattel slave, must depend upon "business prosperity" instead of organizing and fighting. "Does Mrs. Roosevelt mean," McLeod jibed, "that if I work for J. P. Morgan, I'd get $50,000 a week?"

### Discrimination by A. F. of L. Moguls

In other industries the Negro is up against discrimination from trade union bureaucrats as well as from the employer. A paper by A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (A. F. of L.) cited these striking facts: 22 national and international unions exclude Negroes by constitutional provision; some, as the blacksmiths and helpers, take him into "auxiliaries" of helpers but excluding him from blacksmiths unions; the A. F. of L.'s convention resolutions promising to organize him are "meaningless." He added that in the "existing structure" of the A. F. of L., powerful officials "are not essentially interested in increasing their membership, either among Negro or white workers, if such increase in membership may menace old policies."

Yet Randolph called upon Negroes to refuse to act as strike-breakers, condemned the reactionary Negro leaders who oppose organized labor "for the same that Mellon or Morgan is opposed to it," and insisted that Negroes organize "into the trade unions that will accept them and into independent unions . . to fight for admission into unions that exclude them." What he failed to point out is that Negro and white workers, the rank and file, already are uniting in spite of their officials. A conference study on this question named ten Negro workers who were killed in the last two years' strikes in industries employing workers of both races.

A. W. McPherson, Negro leader of the rank and file of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers (A. F. of L.) told how "we are gradually breaking down race prejudice" since steel workers understand with increasing clarity that "it will take the solidarity of both races to defeat our common enemy, the capitalist class, and our so-called lord and master, President Michael Tighe." Tighe, who "has never had a Negro representative in an A. A. convention," admitted only the delegates of 18 lodges representing 18,200 steel workers, in Pittsburgh recently, and excluded those from 54 lodges representing 49,200. The latter, whose sin was to drive for organization against the wishes of Tighe, elected McPherson as Secretary of their

connection with relief and the sales tax has to some extent exposed these parties and placed before the workers the question of a Labor Party. This slogan becomes more and more a part of the growing united front of the working class. In dealing with the question of a Labor Party, the Central Committee in its resolution of January, 1935, characterizes the new and decisive features of the present situation and says that this question must be placed in a new setting, and a new relation of forces.

Events in the last few months verify the correctness of the Central Committee position on the Labor Party question.

On the other hand, there is an increased activity among certain sections of the bourgeoisie to head off this movement or to lead this growing movement into channels of social-reformism and away from the path of the class struggle. A number of conferences initiated by such people as H. Y. Williams, LaFollette, Olson, Milo Reno and others were recently held in Minneapolis, Des Moines, Washington, for the purpose of capturing this sentiment and turning it away from the channels of a mass Labor Party based upon anti-capitalist demands.

**"Progressive" Party Not a Labor Party**

In the early stages of development of this movement for independent political action or a Labor Party, it is necessary that the Communists, through their activities, help to determine in advance the character of this movement. We

Birmingham, Ala., Age-Herald
March 22, 1935

# SOUTHERN FARM SYSTEM RAPPED

## Operation Of Landlord Credit System Target Of Committee

NEW YORK, March 21—(AP)—The Old South's system of tenant farming and share cropping was criticized sharply Thursday by the Committee on Minority Groups in the economic recovery.

"Any self-respecting peasant proprietor in France would view with loathing the condition of a Mississippi cotton cropper," the committee reported of its year's investigations in the South under the financial guidance of the Rosenwald Foundation.

Share croppers and tenants, both black and white, the committee asserted, were "in a state of peonage that approaches slavery," and it condemned the operation of the landlord credit system as "a thoroughly reprehensible system of extortion."

**Program Backed**

A program of peasant proprietorship—individual land owning—was recommended as the solution to the problems in which the South has been involved by wreckage of its economic bulwark of cotton production.

The committee is composed of Edwin R. Embree, of Chicago, president of the Julius Rosenwald Fund Dr. Will W. Alexander, of Atlanta director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, and Prof Charles S. Johnson, head of the Department of Social Research of Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn.

With publication of the report Norman Thomas, Socialist leader who figured in the recent Arkansas share cropper "revolt," declared independently that cotton crop tailment contracts under the AAA have militated against the Southern Arkansas share cropper, causing eviction of hundreds from plantation shacks because government control of the cotton crop lessened labor.

"There was a clause in the government contract," said Thomas, "by which the planter promised share croppers asylum from eviction, but a planter wrote the contract. It carried a trick clause to keep workers 'insofar as possible.'"

The committee, detailing the results of governmental economics in the South, declared of this phase:

**Tenant Held "Left Open"**

"Only after he loses first what property he may possess, and then his tenure, does the tenant come to the form of risk insurance designed for him—relief. The only way the tenant could escape risk under the present system is to become a landowner."

The South's problem is no longer the Negro problem, the report stated, since the bulk of cotton tenants is white, with white tenancy increasing. Half the Negro tenants and one-third the white tenants are share croppers, it said.

"The time has come, it seems, for the cotton South to admit the gravity of its problems and to face a long-time situation," the report continued. "Though one accepts the depression as a temporary thing, the world cotton situation points to forced changes in the South's cotton system.

**Faces Choice**

"With declining exports and increasing foreign cotton production, the South stands face to face with a choice.

"It may choose continued regimentation of agricultural production, with subsidies for released lands and relief for displaced tenants and agricultural laborers.

"Or it may decide that this is too great a price to pay for concentrated landownership. In such a case America might well follow the example of Ireland and Denmark and embark upon a program of government aid to peasant proprietorship.

# GREENSBORO, N. C. NEWS

APR 1 1935

## Shears and Paste

**The South's Degradation.**

The first suggestions of cotton restriction programs brought from students of southern affairs the prophecy that one result would be the creation of new difficulties for that vast population of tenant farmers who constitute a majority of the section's agricultural labor. Being landless themselves, they would be cast adrift; being virtually destitute already, they would add immensely to the relief burden.

Since the institution of the restriction policy, at least four major studies have been made of this problem. One was under the direction of Dr. Calvin B. Hoover, formerly of Duke university, now consumer's counsel for the AAA. A second was by the Memphis chapter of the League for Industrial Democracy—a limited investigation of 500 families in four states. A third was by another AAA investigator, Mary Connor Myers, whose studies in Arkansas were suppressed because her report, one farm authority feared, "may lead to legal action." A fourth has just been made by Dr. Rupert B. Vance, of the University of North Carolina, acting for the "committee on minority groups in the economic recovery." It was concerned chiefly with negro farmers.

The substance of these reports is not surprising. It was already known that tenantry is increasing; that it had subjected hundreds of thousands of people to virtual slavery; that it is wearing out the land and destroying community values of all kinds. All the demoralizing effects of the system are now shown to be increasing. Farm tenants, who constitute 71 per cent of all cotton farmers and 58 per cent of all agricultural workers in the south, have been cut loose in multitudes. They have drifted in large numbers to the cities, and there aggravated the relief problem. Those remaining on the farms have, in general, shared only slightly in federal benefits—have been cheated out of them in numerous instances by unscrupulous landlords—and have a worse future to look toward now than five years ago. In 13 southern states one family out of every four is living on federal relief. There is no prospect under present farm policy that their condition will be improved.

There might be such a chance under a measure like the proposed Bankhead bill. It would create a farm tenant homes corporation to lend $47,000,000,000 at low interest rates to tenant farmers for the purchase of land. Another proposal, backed by Senator Russell, would use some of the proposed works bill appropriation for the same purpose. Secretary Wallace has indorsed the Bankhead plan. It is opposed by Senator Smith, however, on the ground, first, that what is needed is to make farming profitable and that when that is done, people will stay on farms or go back to them; and, second, that the measure runs counter to the restriction program by putting more farmers to work. In theory, however, their work would be directed more toward subsistence farming than to money crops—a theory which in its turn led to the objection that most tenant farmers have been so long inured to money crops that they are not fitted for subsistence farming and would have to be taught it, laboriously and at great expense.

Such divergence of opinion merely indicates what has always been apparent—that farm tenantry, which has been a recognized problem for 50 years, will never be easy to remedy and cannot in any circumstances be remedied in whole or quickly. What needs to be recognized now, however is that it has become much worse and under present conditions is becoming vastly more serious. That fact has given impetus to the study of the problem in the light of present farm policies and to such efforts at alleviation as the Bankhead bill Nobody who scans the present available information can doubt that this is the millstone which, as much as any other, is keeping the south struggling in the mire of poverty and ignorance.—Norfolk Virginian-Pilot

# Brookings Survey Warns Farmers Against Artificially High Prices

WASHINGTON, Sept. 15.— (AP) — The Brookings Institution warned farmers today against "artificially high price levels which might eventually react adversely to the producers themselves."

In another statement involving the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, the American Liberty League attacked the potato control amendment as "of doubtful constitutionality, arbitrary, unreasonable and uneconomic."

The Brookings report was based on its studies of the effect of the AAA program on dairying and livestock. Dr. John D. Black, professor of economics at Harvard, found in the dairying study that "little tangible result has been achieved in either production or marketing control, outside the reduction in numbers of excess cattle brought about by the cattle purchasing program and the buying of diseased animals."

D. A. Fitzgerald, formerly of Iowa State College, who conducted the livestock study, reached the conclusion that "actual price rises in the industry have been chiefly the result of drouth."

He found a "most disturbing implication" in AAA amendments which the report said add interest and taxes to the "parity" price formula and "which still imply that benefit payments are not to be considered in determining the relation of farm prices to parity prices."

"Farmers at the present time do not generally feel that parity prices for hogs are desirable," Fitzgerald said, "but the continued emphasis on such prices and all the publicity of the AAA may in time make farmers feel that they are entitled under all the conditions to parity prices for their livestock.

"Solely from their own point of view, producers should hesitate greatly before supporting a program calling for reductions in supply large enough to cause any very large shift in consumers' demand for pork.

"For a short period of time a large reduction may not have any permanent ill effects; but over a longer period it seems probable that the gross value of the hog crop would decline."

The Liberty League, asserting that the "AAA has become enmeshed in a network of its own making," reminded that basic agricultural commodities have been increased from seven to 15, and that "Congress and enforcement officials must go on and on until every product of agriculture is brought under control."

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Geneva, Ala., Banner
October 31, 1935

## COTTON TENANCY

For the student of economics it is always much easier to point out a problem than to put a finger upon its solution. The University of North Carolina Press has just issued a small volume on "The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy," in which the authors, Charles S. Johnson, Edwin R. Embree and W. W. Alexander, picture in stark terms the danger to the South of an agricultural condition whereby the tenant can have no joy in the present and no hope for the future. They suggest that the remedy is to give the tenant opportunity to become a land owner with government assistance, but they realize that even that is hedged about with enormous difficulties. So startling are some of the things recorded by these writers and investigators after a three years' intensive study of tenancy that every man interested in the South future should become familiar with them in order that he may intelligently contribute the benefit of his knowledge to their solution. Here are half a dozen paragraphs taken at random from the book:

"Cotton has been the most important American commercial crop. . . . For more than a century, this greatest of economic assets has been also our greatest social humiliation.

"The ancient order of cotton culture in the Old South is doomed. Sweeping changes in Southern farming must come swiftly if millions of former plantation workers are not to be completely wrecked—if the region itself is not to suffer violent ruin.

"Negroes no longer make up the bulk of cotton tenants. White workers, in an increasing flood, have been drawn into the cotton fields until today they outnumber the blacks more than five to three.

"Out of every hundred cotton farms, over sixty are operated by tenants.

"The white tenants have increased steadily, filling the new openings in the expanding industry, and taking the places left vacant by negroes who migrate to the plantations to Northern cities.

"The evil is not in renting land but in the traditions and practices which have grown up about it in the South.

"More than a third of the tenants have debts of more than a year's standing."

Some of the difficulties faced in escaping from the system whose bad features are recognized even by those most intimately identified with it are stated in these words: "The present system is so constructed that the landless remain landless and the propertyless remain propertyless. To accumulate property, to increase independence, is to oppose the system itself. In a plantation area it is easier to be a cropper and conform to the system than to be a small owner or renter. For a share tenant to rise above his status he must overcome insuperable obstacles: (1) the agriculture that he knows fits only the old system (2) the banks cannot finance him because they are geared to finance the plantations, (3) the cost of merchant credit dissipates his accumulated working capital, and (4) the crop lien system has destroyed his independence in the marketing of his crop."

Problems of finance appear to be fundamentally the barrier to emergence from a condition burdensome to landowner and tenant alike. Here are some statements of the authors showing the heavy financial difficulties under which the cotton South labors:

"In 1850 when the total cotton, rice and sugar sales amounted to $119,400,000, the total bank deposits in the South were around $20,000,000. In 1860 when the value of the crops reached $200,000,000, less than $30,000,000 was in Southern banks.

"Bank credit in the South has been inadequate, and this has made necessary reliance upon other and costly sources.

"The South now is experiencing a reconcentration of tenant farms under corporate ownership. . . . . It is estimated that areas amounting to 30 per cent of the cotton lands of the various states are owned by insurance companies and banks."

It is another illustration of a condition to which The Journal has so often referred, namely, that the South has not the capital to do the things that it would like to do for its own interest because an adverse balance of trade drains the South of a billion dollars a year. But if the South is not able of itself to finance a policy which will stop the increase of farm tenancy, it must find other ways to do the financing, even if it be necessary to ask government aid in increasing individual farm ownership. It will be easier to find the remedy when there is thorough and general understanding of the problem itself and the handicap it is proving in the development of a diversified agriculture in the Southern states.

## EDUCATOR ASSAILS U. S. FARM POLICY

### 'Damnably Socialistic Scheme,' Vanderbilt Professor Calls It In Birmingham Speech

BIRMINGHAM, ALA., Dec. 16.—(AP)—The Federal farm program "with its socialistic tendencies," is one of the greatest causes of unemployment, Dr. Gus Dyer, professor of economics at Vanderbilt University said tonight in an address before the Southern States Industrial Council.

Dr. Dyer, the last speaker before the annual one-day meeting, declared the farm program was a "damnably socialistic scheme" which was decreasing drastically production of farm commodities, had reduced the number of farm hands employed, and had reduced employment of railroads in hauling such commodities to warehouses and factories.

The economist said the total farm problem was not as serious as presented, adding the total farm mortgages amounted to only $4,000,000,000.

Dr. Dyer said the farm program benefits only the owners, a total of 3,000,000 persons, leaving 50,000,000 other rural residents uncared for.

**South's Influence Praised**

John E. Edgerton, of Lebanon, Tenn. who was reelected president, told the council it might become necessary for the South to "save the nation again."

The South, he said, was the section with highest percentage of Anglo-Saxon residents who "think alike," and that the greatest danger was from "radicalism" brought in from other sections of the country.

**"This radicalism," he said, "has not come within just the last two or three years, but within the last 10 years."**

Besides Edgerton, the following officers were reelected: Fitzgerald Hall, of Nashville, and John A. Miller, of Atlanta, vice-presidents; S. L. Durham, treasurer, and C. C. Gilbert, of Nashville, secretary.

Charles L. Cornelius, former attorney-general of Tennessee, told the industrialists "loss and confusion and a continuance of business depression" would follow a continuation of present trends of Federal legislation.

Cornelius attacked "New Deal" legislation such as the Guffey, Wagner, and social security acts.

"The average American citizen," he said, "will not agree with the theory now apparently being advanced that because the New Deal has attempted to do something about the situation' all of the fundamental principles of American government should be uprooted."

"If business recovery is to be had and the government of the United States is to continue in the future as it has in the past, such recovery and such future existence can only be accomplished by the individual efforts of American citizens unfettered by governmental control and competition and unhampered by governmental regulations."

**Urges Political Activities**

Urging business men to take a more active part in politics, he said, "I believe that the only hope on the horizon of the present day confusion lies in an intelligent, whole-hearted interest in government and 'politics' by both the brains and brawn of American industry and business."

Speaking earlier in the day, James E. Edmonds, editor of The Cotton Trade Journal, New Orleans, discussed the government cotton program, and criticized the South for failure to produce a "long-range" program.

The present cotton program, he said, "Any plan is better than no plan," but he termed it a "frank abandonment of the foreign market."

He advocated allotment to farmers of the estimated 5,000,000 bales of domestic cotton, with an added payment to growers, with the remainder of the crop to go on the market at world price levels.

"With low-cost lands, with a proper credit system, with the American transportation system, with the American system of free marketing—with the southern farmer living thriftily out of his own soil and not off the store shelf and out of tin cans—with special compensation for his allotted domestic production — the farmer can be well provided," he said.

"He could blame none but himself for failure. I believe there are a million farms in the South that could, under those conditions, produce an average of 13,000,000 bales of cotton a year; 5,000,000 for the folks within the United States and 8,000,000 to find free sale in foreign markets!"

Between 300 and 400 business men and industrial leaders from 14 Southern States have registered for the meetings here.

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# TENANCY EVIL DISCUSSED BY C. S. JOHNSON

## Fisk Professor Is Only Negro Delegate at Economic Meet

3-15-35

NEW ORLEANS. — (ANP)—Hailed as the most important conference in the South in the past two decades, the meeting of the Southern Regional committee of the Social Science Research council to discuss the cotton economy of the South, was concluded here last week with the South's most distinguished sociologists and economists present. Significant was the fact that among these white leaders was Dr. Charles S. Johnson of Fisk university, whose observations while addressing the group, presented the problem of the Negro to the southland in a different light.

Discussed at the conference were such subjects as the cotton economy of the South in international economic relations during the next quarter century; whether or not the tenancy and cropper agrarian system is inseparable a part of the cotton economy; whether or not economic and social diversity can be merged with this economy or whether the entire economy will be replaced as a result of sudden displacement of cotton as a staple by new inventions and discoveries; the effect of the cotton economy on the social and political thought and institutions of the south.

**60 Representatives Present**

Personnel of the conference showed about 60 representatives of the leading economists and sociologists of the major southern institution, and of the department of agriculture.

Dr. Charles S. Johnson of Fisk university, one of the speakers observed that the evils of tenancy have been neglected as being a Negro problem; that there are a third more white tenants than Negroes in the cotton area; that tenancy is a fixed status of economic exploitation affecting Negroes and whites alike; that it is increasing with the concentration of land holdings and absentee landlordism.

That it is an outworn economy of a frontier society now long passed; that it is destructive to agricultural development and to the human elements bound up with its uncertain fortunes.

He pointed to the prospect of a collapse of the cotton economy in the plantation area from its own weight, as a result of contracted export markets abroad, the increased use of machinery, the movement of cotton to the southwest, where mass farming seems inevitable, and the present unreducible surplus even after a 40 per cent acreage reduction and a 30 per cent labor displacement.

**Tenancy is Uncivilized**

It was noted that every civilized nation has abolished tenancy, instituting a new security and independence in land ownership, and and that only such a course for the southern states could provide the security required for the 700,000 Negro tenant farmers in the South who represent no less than 3,000,000 Negroes included in these families.

Some of the distinguished sociologists in attendance were:

W. E. Gettys, University of Texas; James W. Martin, University of Kentucky (present address, the Interstate Commission on Conflicting Taxation, Chicago, Ill.); S. D. Myres, Southern Methodist university; H. C. Nixon, Tulane university; Goodrich C. White, Emory university; Raymond D. Thomas, Oklahoma A. and M. college; J. T. Sanders, Oklahoma A. and M. college; T. J. Cauley, Gorgia School of Technology; Rupert Vance, University of North Carolina; C. A. Wiley, University of Texas; Charles S. Johnson, Fisk university; Howard W. Odum, University of North Carolina; M. D. Anderson, University of Florida; Mercer Evans, Emory university.

Benjamin B. Kendrick, Woman's college, University of North Carolina; Walter J. Matherly, University of Florida; Charles W. Pipkin, Louisiana State university; Wilson Gee, University of Virginia; N. B. Bond, University of Mississippi; Joseph Peterson, George Peabody college; George Fort Milton, Chattanooga News; George W. Stocking, Petroleum Labor board, Washington, D. C.; Calvin Hoover, Duke university; T. L. Howard, University of Chattanooga and TVA; Roscoe Martin, University of Texas; H. C. Hoffsommer, Alabama Polytechnic institute; Carl Rister, University of Oklahoma; W. V. Holloway, University of Alabama; S. M. Derrick, University of South Carolina; E. B. Eberling, Vanderbilt university; Edgar B. Stern, New Orleans.

M. H. Bryan, University of Georgia; C. E. Allred, University of Tennessee; C. O. Brannen, University of Arkansas; Will W. Alexander, head of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, Atlanta, Ga.

A. Vandenbosch, University of Kentucky; Cullen Gosnell, Emory University; R. H. Shryock, Duke University; Alfred Holt Stone, Jackson, Miss., and William F. Ogburn University of Chicago.

# BRITAIN MAY SCRAP 13,000,000 SPINDLES

7-13-35

## Reorganization of Cotton Industry Proposed on Basis of Lower Production.

## WORLD MARKETS LOST

## 9,000,000 Spindles Abandoned in Past Four Years — One-fourth Less Raw Cotton Brought Here.

By HAROLD CALLENDER.

Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

LONDON, July 12.—A step toward the reorganization of Great Britain's greatest exporting industry on the basis of permanently lowered production may be taken by Parliament if efforts made today succeed in insuring the passage of a bill for scrapping 13,000,000 cotton spindles, about one-third of the present number.

Nine million spindles have been abandoned in the past four years. The cotton trade as a whole has reduced employes by 100,000 or 17 per cent.

But even this curtailment does not suffice, as production is now only one-half the pre-war quantity. The industry is still burdened with a huge surplus of equipment, which in a time of increasing economic nationalism is unlikely ever again to be able to produce profitably.

Evidence of Britain's remarkable recovery is not to be found in Lanchasire, for the cotton industry has not shared in the trade improvement, of which Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin spoke in the House of Commons on Tuesday. It has not profited from tariffs, but rather has suffered, since its former prosperity rested upon export markets, which now everywhere have been reduced both by tariffs and by the growth of local industries.

Before the war China, Japan, India, Canada and Brazil bought more than half the British exports of cotton piece goods. But since the war these countries have doubled their own productive plants and have proportionately cut their purchases from Britain. Japan, indeed, has become a formidable rival of Britain in world markets.

The British cotton trade which, even ten years ago, employed more than a half million persons now employs 350,000, incidentally using less American cotton.

Reduction of cotton spindles is a phase of the industrial revolution Britain is undergoing as a result of the shrinkage of her former great exporting trades. It will mark the formal abandonment of the hope of regaining old markets abroad, which will now be written off as a loss. The exporting industry will be geared down to permanently lower output.

British recovery, which is mainly due to development of home markets for new industries, finds cotton, like coal and shipping still depressed.

The cotton bill, which is supported by a majority of producers but is strongly opposed by a minority who contend it is primarily in the interest of banks that have bought surplus spindles cheaply, proposes a levy on the industry to raise £2,000,000 for the purchase of excess spindles whose competition tends to reduce prices. There is no law against price-fixing, and trade associations often fix prices by agreements. These, however, have never been tested in the courts.

But this has been difficult in the cotton trade, because costs vary widely. The spinning industry, which is affected by the present bill, forms about half the cotton industry.

The most notable aspect of the reduced British cotton trade, from the American viewpoint is, that purchases of raw cotton from the United States have declined by nearly one-fourth in the last two years. Purchases of the same type of cotton from Brazil have increased nearly one hundred and from India threefold.

# NEW LEGUME PROMISES TO GIVE WEALTH TO DELTA

BY F. J. HURST

Extension Agricultural Editor

A NEW winter-growing, early-maturing, reseeding, nitrogen-gathering legume grown during the past four years by Howard Stovall, former Memphian, a leading delta planter, has not only rewarded the efforts of this enterprising farmer with richer lands and larger yields of farm crops at lower costs, but the new plant promises to spread quickly throughout the delta, invade the hill sections of the state and as soon as sufficient seed is available take first place among legumes in a large scale soil building program.

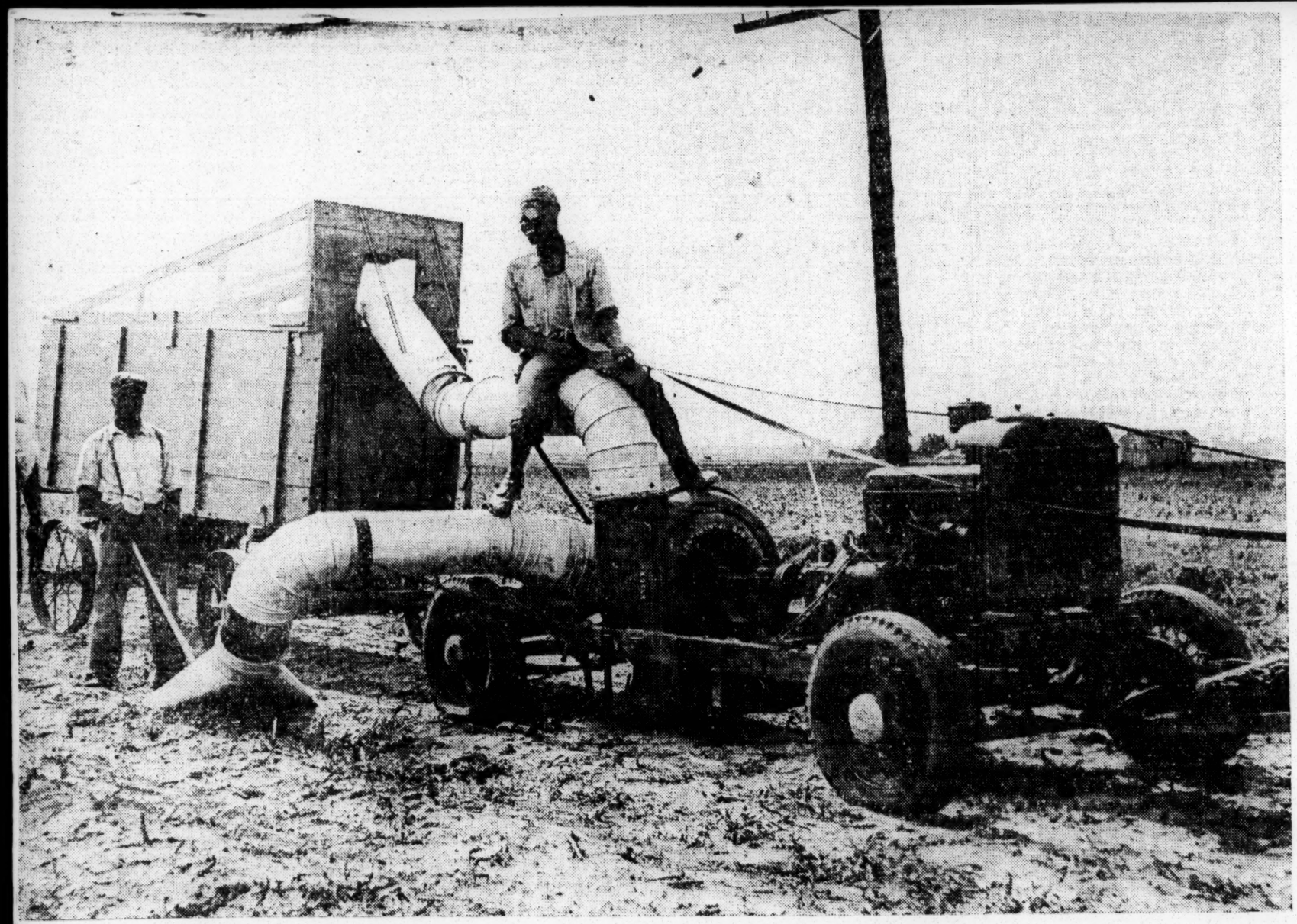
The new plant, which holds distinct advantage over hairy vetch, Austrian winter peas and common burr clover, is early southern giant burr clover. During recent weeks many groups of farmers have visited Mr. Stovall's plantation at Stovall, Miss., to see 60 acres of this clover which he reserved for seed purposes and to learn at first hand just how the crop is handled and how the mechanical harvester invented by Mr. Stovall takes up the seed at the rate of 1,000 bushels per day and at a cost of only three cents per bushel.

**Better Than Ordinary Clover**

"Early southern giant burr clover more nearly fills the bill for soil building in the delta and hill sections of the state than any other one crop that has ever been developed," declares Mr. Stovall.

And to this appraisal, J. R. Ricks, veteran state experiment station director and crops expert, who has made a careful study of this crop both on Mr. Stovall's plantation and that of Mr. J. D. Perry of Dubbs, the only two plantations in the state growing the crop, saying that early giant burr clover "is a wonderful improvement over ordinary burr clover."

The outstanding advantages of the new clover are its early maturity and its amazing capacity to produce seed. Early giant burr clover makes a growth of two to two and



A wrecked auto, with transmission backwards, and a cotton drier fan, does the work of 40 laborers in saving seed from Howard Stovall's burr clover field.

one-half tons of green matter by the first to the fifteenth of March, where hairy vetch and Austrian winter peas do not produce an equivalent growth until the first or fifteenth of April. This permits the farmer to plow under the clover early in the spring and get his corn and cotton crops off to a fast start.

Mr. Stovall this year has harvested 300 bushels of seed per acre on 60 acres. He states that one acre of this clover will supply enough seed to plant from 40 to 50 acres and that by using the machine harvester to cut the cost of saving the seed, land can be seeded at a cost of from 20 to 30 cents per acre as compared with a cost of $3 to $5 per acre for vetch.

**Reseeds the Land**

Not only is the initial cost of seeding low, but once the land is seeded, the clover will continue to reseed itself year after year, thus eliminating both the annual cost of buying seed and the expense of planting.

Invention of the seed harvester by Mr. Stovall promises to do much to help expand the acreage planted to this crop, as the machine does the work of 40 to 50 laborers and reduces the cost of harvesting from 20 to 25 cents per bushel by hand to about three cents per bushel with the use of the machine.

In harvesting, the vines are permitted to mature and most of the seed will drop off onto the ground. A hay tedder is first run over the land to finish knocking the seed from the vines. The vines are then raked off with a hay rake and a hand rake to get any vines that may be left in the middle of the rows. The machine then picks up the seed like a vacuum cleaner, harvesting 90 to 95 per cent of the seed and leaving enough on the ground for another crop.

The machine is simply the chassis of a wrecked automobile with a transmission put in backward, making an overdrive to secure the proper fan speed. The fan is a regular cotton drier fan equipped with a plate on the front to keep the seed from going through the fan and to prevent threshing of the seed from the burrs.

# Cotton Production On Rise In Brazil

RIO DE JANEIRO, Sept. 8.—(AP)—Ministry of agriculture figures published today showed Brazil's cotton output this year will top last year's. At the same time, business circles expected the trend to continue upward in 1936.

The ministry's figures coincided with arrival of an article published in the United States by Henry A. Wallace, secretary of agriculture, in which he recognized great producing potentialities in Brazil.

"The secretary's views were well-founded," said Alpheu Domingues, cotton expert at the agricultural ministry. "It is no exaggeration to say that Brazil can become the world's leading producer of cotton."

Domingues is to leave soon for Washington, D. C., where he will occupy the newly created post of cotton observer at the Brazilian embassy.

The ministry's figures showed a total of 370,000 metric tons of cotton would be produced in Brazil this year, compared with 279,700 in 1934. This meant, the report showed, a 1935 crop of 1,630,200 American bales against 1,230,680 bales in 1934. Of this crop, officials said 600,000 bales would be for domestic consumption.

Despite large increases in the Northeastern States, Sao Paulo was shown to have kept its supremacy as the country's leading producer. Luis Piza Sobrinho, secretary of agriculture for the State of Sao Paulo, produced figures anticipating a crop of 475,200 American bales there this year.

Pizo Sobrinho said the State would plant about 9,344 square miles to cotton next year.

Spartanburg, S. C. Journal
October 19, 1935

## Smug Complacency

A federal judge in North Carolina is quoted by the Raleigh News and Observer as saying: "The average condition of the negro tenant in America is preferable to that of the average working man in any country in Europe." Such a sweeping assertion is open to challenge and debate, to say the least—but even admitting the truth of it, the reaction should be only that of pity for the plight of the Europeans. The hard, cruel living conditions of landless men on American farms should arouse the careful study and action of thoughtful Americans with the end in view to alleviate these conditions. As the New and Observer pertinently comments: "To brag that their condition is not so bad as the condition of some men elsewhere is to find an easy solace for conditions that should shame the 'richest nation on earth.'"

Yet when Franklin D. Roosevelt and his administration attempts any movement, experiment or scheme to better the lot of the toiler and producer the selfish interests and their special writers, who are masters in the field of presenting economic, social and industrial theses, open up a barrage. Selfishness and greed have done their work in placing the tenant, landless farmer and worker of both races in the plight they flounder in today. But progress is being made to give them a better opportunity by this administration—the first administration to effectively work to this end since the late Warren G. Harding was inaugurated president.

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# FEAR WORKERS' WRATH AGAINST NEW ATTACKS ON LIVING STANDARDS THROUGH N.R.A. RULING; NEW DRIVE OPENED BY ROOSEVELT ON FARMERS

## Supreme Court Decision Paves the Way for New Attacks

## AAA AIDED THE RICH

## Emergency Relief Bill Is Crying Need of Ruined Farmers

**By Lem Harris**
**(Sec'y of Farmers National Committee for Action)**

The decision of the U. S. Supreme Court which paralyzes the N.R.A., and repeals the Frazier-Lemke-Long Bankruptcy Act is the signal for a wider and fiercer attack on the masses of small and middle farmers. Daily Worker

This decision means that reactionary big business has called a turn, a speeding up of the process of impoverishment of farmers, and the lowering of standards of living of the workers. 5-29-35

All farm groups must immediately submerge petty differences and organize a mass united front struggle against this open attack of capitalism. New York N. Y.

Roosevelt will now try to appear in the role of an embattled liberal with his back to the wall fighting against big business. The trade union leaders, along with the leaders of old line farm organizations, will stand with him. Out of the mouths of these traitors to organized workers and farmers we will hear the excuse for their surrender. They will say: "The AA was bad in spots but was better than nothing."

And they will unite under the sloggan: "Roosevelt or Ruin."

**Let's Not Be Fooled**

But let's not be fooled. Let us remember that the AAA was used to stop our wave of struggles against foreclosures and evictions which reached the high point of 54 in every 1,000 farms in 1933. Let us remember that foreclosures continued under the AAA and in the South it was a ruthless farce giving no protection to share-croppers, forcing 300,000 on the road as a direct result of crop reductions under the AAA.

Let us remember that under these two standards of living have been plowed down to coolie levels along with our crops. That we have twenty million on relief, and that two million of these are farmers.

Let us remember that Tugwell declared a surplus of two million farmers and that under the Roosevelt work relief program, Mr. Tugwell has been given the job of organizing this dispossessed class of farmers into a peasant form of strip farming known as subsistance farms. Let us remember that these nine old men on the Supreme Court were very slow in their decision to "protect" the Constitution. They waited until Roosevelt had served his purpose of bailing out the banks, reducing farm surpluses. They waited until the farmers had been impoverished and evicted, and their crops so reduced that now the United States faces actual food shortages and must import basic agricultural products.

They waited two years. Let us remember these torturous two years during which leading farmers were clubbed and in the South some militant farmers were lynched.

**The A. A. A. was used not only to block the rising struggles of militant farmers, but also to save the profits of industry and encourage the rich farmers at the expense of the poorer farmers. Of course, the ballyhoo** surrounding the A. A. A. never mentioned these real purposes, but once in a while a responsible A. A. A. official would forget himself long enough to tell some of the truth.

Chester Davis, Administrator of the A. A. A., for example in a Department of Agriculture Bulletin issued in June, 1934, stated that the provisions of the A. A. A. (that is, crop reduction and lower standards of living for small farmers) would have come about anyway due to economic forces even if there had been no A. A. A. But "The use of benefit payments to compensate farmers for making these adjustments facilitates accomplishment of the transition **without the economic disturbances and the unfavorable consequences to business and industry which would otherwise occur."** Daily Worker

True to this statement of purpose, the N. R. A. and the A. A. A. together succeeded in raising the profits of industry from 50 to 100 per cent. since 1932. Similarly the rich farmers skimmed off some cream too. Benefit payments to farmers who contracted under the A. A. A. would have averaged $90 a farmer. However, in the South there was not even a pretense about paying the croppers who do the work in raising the cotton crop—the landlords got it all. One cotton landlord received $80,000 benefit payments for one year, a Florida corporation received $800,000 and a California hog man got $400,000. There are studies of average counties as in Iowa where 94 per cent of the benefit payments paid went to creditors. Coupled to this policy, the method of handling relief in the drought area completed the ruin of the average farmer.

**New Deal Served Purpose**

The capitalists, which include the rich farmers, feel strngthened. The New Deal has served its purpose and its essential features can be swept aside. The next step in an open season on thousands of small farmers. Legally speaking, they have lost their title to their homes and equipment. Humanly speaking, they have a better right a stronger reason for closing ranks and fighting for security than ever before.

A great struggle is looming in the areas which have received rain as to who is going to get the cash from this year's crop. The creditors have claims on the whole crop; the farmers are thinking of their families and production for the following year. We can expect a wave of attempted foreclosures. Even the disgruntled Senator Frazier warns us of this.

Our resistance to the collection agents, the eviction notices, etc., will be effective wherever we have united the mass of farmers into a determined, solid body. The program adopted at the Sioux Falls Conferenc calls for such unity. And it calls for the Farmers Emergency Relief Bill, a bill which benefits the poor farmers at the expense of the rich. This bill must be enacted. Big business held off the Supreme Court for two years until Roosevelt and his N. R. A. and A. A. A. had prepared the ground for the new offensive against the poor masses of farmers and workers. If we mobilize millions of farmers behind our farm bill, the Supreme Court will never dare to declare it unconstitutional.

**THE SOUTH'S OPEN DOOR**

The Constitution's contention that instead of sending to Alaska colonies of farmers from the drouth-stricken areas of the west, the government should enable them to reestablish themselves on the fertile lands of the south, is strongly indorsed by A. N. Seward, president of the Fitzgerald Chamber of Commerce. Atlanta, Ga

In a letter to The Constitution, Mr. Seward writes that "having spent a considerable portion of my life in the northwest, I am thoroughly familiar with farming conditions there as well as in Georgia and believe it would be a worthy project for all loyal Georgians to endeavor to induce farmers from the stricken area to migrate to Georgia, where we have ideal weather conditions the year around."

The people of Fitzgerald and of Ben Hill county are fully qualified to testify to the wealth of opportunity existing in the south for the agriculturists of other sections less favored by nature.

Forty years ago, a group of western farmers was brought to Georgia by P. H. Fitzgerald, of Indiana, and a new colony was established in what was then portions of Irwin and Wilcox counties in south Georgia.

The site on which Fitzgerald now stands was a crossroads, with not a single house or store, and the land on which the farm families from the west settled was, in the main, in its virgin state.

Now there is no more prosperous community of its size in the country than Fitzgerald, and the surrounding farms are populated with happy and well-to-do agricultural families. With but few exceptions, practically every kind of agricultural product grown anywhere in the United States is produced by these farmers.

There are millions of acres of equally fertile ground lying idle in the south—but instead of bringing the unfortunate farmers of the drouth areas to this section, where they will find a model year-around climate, with smiling skies and abundant water supply, the government is sending them to Alaska, where for more than half the year they will be ice-bound and in practical isolation from the rest of the world.

For half the cost, and with far less hardship, these families could be permanently and prosperously settled in the south.

In an editorial deploring the sending of these farmers to Alaska, the Fitzgerald Leader urges that as the government proceeds with the program of moving western farmers off denuded lands, it be borne in mind that "no better lands nor climatic conditions can be found anywhere than right here, where the Fitzgerald colonists of 1895 founded their homes."

What is true of the area around Fitzgerald is also true throughout the south.

The hardy pioneers of the Fitzgerald colony had to carve out their own destiny, since there were no government loans in those days. With the aid now being extended, a thousand Fitzgeralds could be established in the south, with the hard-working and intelligent farmers of the northwest as the nucleus of each.

## KING COTTON, THE JESTER

Why mourn the loss of our export trade in cotton when the possession of it through generations produced widespread poverty in the South?

That is a question asked by T. Scott Roberts, president of the Alabama Cotton Manufacturers' Association, in an article written for Alapressa, official organ of the Alabama Press Association.

The question is one asked frequently as an answer to those who claim that the price-pegging policies of the AAA are responsible for our dwindling foreign markets. If the farmer, in order to hold the foreign market, must accept less than 12 cents a pound for his product, then why keep that market?

It has not been proved yet that the loss of the foreign market is due to the price. There is more reason to believe that it has been due to our blind tariff policies. Other nations cannot buy our cotton at any price unless we are willing to buy from them.

Except under the impetus of some abnormal world-wide condition, the South has never received enough from its cotton to provide a standard of living that would compare favorably with the rest of the nation. The price has ranged from five to 35 cents a pound, resulting in alternate periods of poverty and overproduction.

The fluctuation in the price has resulted in unnatural conditions which have worked to the distinct disadvantage of those dependent upon cotton. There has never been a decade in the history of Southern cotton during which the price of cotton maintained anything like a constant level.

In spite of this the South has managed to move along with a fair degree of progress, chiefly because it controlled the world market. But with other nations rapidly entering the field, the South's supremacy in the world market is threatened. Six years of depression, with cotton ranging from five to 12 cents a pound leads to the question: Can the South hope to continue under such conditions?

For the sake of the future, some method must be found to: (1) Determine with a reasonable degree of certainty the amount of Southern cotton the world can or will consume, and control production accordingly; (2) Determine approximately the price that will be paid for that amount.

Necessarily, if the South is to find an answer to these two points, there must be some wrestling with the law of supply and demand. This involves breaking down the time-worn belief that the law of supply and demand should not be questioned, or even discussed.

The AAA has attempted to question at least, and regulate to a certain extent, the law of supply and demand. Its critics charge that the AAA is guilty of many wrong-doings in its attempt, many of the charges doubtless being justified. But at the time the AAA program was inaugurated it was the only hope of staving off disaster which appeared inevitable.

Today, although the criticism is mounting, the AAA cannot be dropped for obvious reasons. The answer is to improve and not to destroy the program.

Mr. Roberts believes that the South should stake its future on a higher degree of industrialism. But industrialization takes both time and capital. The East at present is speckled with idle factories, and it is not reasonable to suppose that capital to build additional plants will be forthcoming.

The textile manufacturer charges that the agricultural South has suffered at the hands of the industrial East with its high tariffs, and the entire South agrees with him. But charging abuses to the East is not enough to correct those abuses. We have been doing that for generations to no avail.

He also complains, and justly so, that while the farmers claim the processing tax is their answer to the tariff, the East has not borne the burden of the processing tax. The textile industry is the only one that is concentrated in the South, and that industry has carried the load. He also claims that the processing tax has slowed down the consumption of cotton. But at the present there is no indication that the burden will be shifted, nor that the handicap will be removed.

Gen. Hugh S. Johnson recently pointed out the injustice of placing the tax on a single industry and on the section which it is supposed to benefit. He suggested that all industries be required to share the burden. His suggestion is well taken, since industry as a whole has been the beneficiary from our tariff policies.

There must be a solution to the problems that have arisen in connection with the AAA. It must be remembered that the AAA is a new departure under the capitalistic system. To suppose that it would reach perfection in a short time is unreasonable.

Evidently, the Administration realizes that the program cannot continue on its present basis without some alterations and is determined to improve on the present set-up.

Meanwhile, in spite of the shortcomings of the program, the South should be patient. To demand that the AAA be thrown overboard in its entirety is to abandon the only attempt on the part of the Federal government to aid the farmer in general and the South in particular.

### BRAZILIAN COTTON GAINS

The increase in Brazilian cotton production during the past few years, and the manner in which it is entering into competition with the American cotton in the world markets, is forcibly portrayed in a report prepared by the ministry of agriculture and published in the August monthly review issued by the Bank of London and South America.

The prospective output of raw cotton by the various producing states this year is put at 370,000 tons (1,480,000 500-pound bales), as compared with 280,000 tons (1,120,000 bales) in 1934 and 150,000 tons (600,000 bales) in 1933. The increase from 1933 to 1935 demonstrates the impetus given to cotton culture since the Brazilian government started its campaign in 1932 to induce more farmers to take up production of the staple on a commercial basis, giving them all possible assistance.

The Brazilian cotton-growing section is divided into two districts; in the northern states, planting is done during the months of January to June, and the crop is gathered from August to the end of the year. In the southern zone, planting takes place between September and November, and the crop is harvested between the months of March and July. This condition makes cotton growing and marketing a year-round industry for the entire zone, and unless supply greatly exceeds demand, provides a continuous flow of the staple to market without necessity of long storage.

The total export of raw cotton from Brazil in 1933 was only 11,693 tons (46,772 bales), while last year exports jumped to 126,648 tons (506,592 bales). Total exports during the months of January to April this year were recorded at 46,912 tons (187,648 bales), compared with 82,360 bales for the same period last year. If the same ratio is carried out through the year, around 562,944 bales will have been taken by the world markets.

These figures are not startling in quantity at the present time, but if they continue to double in each succeeding year as they have in the past three years, the Brazilian menace to American cotton exports will assume the proportions of a real problem within the next few years.

The report discloses that Brazil's cotton is being exported to Great Britain, Germany, France, Belgium and Portugal, with Britain taking over one-half of the total. That these exports will increase is indicated by the fact that the Brazilian government is backing projects for the production of the highest grades of long staple; experts are employed to instruct growers in seed selection and the best methods of culture, and their export bale is a neat package, greatly desired by British spinners, who have long condemned the unsightly bale that comes from America. It is interesting to note that two of the greatest exporting companies in the world have opened branches in Brazil, and with their marketing set-ups in various foreign countries the Brazilians are relieved of one of the most important adjuncts of the cotton industry.

A road to the solution of America's cotton problem is not more cotton of ordinary grade and staple, but more high-grade long staple, and a high density gin-compressed bale.

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COLUMBUS, O.
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## No Songs in Cotton Fields?

IS the old south, with all its traditions, passing away? Will that area eventually become so mechanized that the colored man and the mule will be only memories of plantation days?

Abolition of slavery destroyed a compulsory labor system, but it did not change greatly the picturesque setting of plantations and cotton fields, the "great house" and the cabins, the singing of the cotton pickers and the peculiar rythmic choruses of the southern field hands.

But now, it is said, the whole thing may be changed. Inventions are being perfected which will make mechanical cotton picking not only possible but profitable, and do the work much faster than the colored folks can do it by hand.

The invention of the Whitney cotton gin is given as one of the great promoters of slavery, because it made cotton growing on a large sale profitable. But if the mechanical cotton picker works and is generally used, the descendants of the old farm hands of the slavery days will be forced out of the fields into other employment, which they may not so easily find in the land of their birth.

Many of the Negro spiritual songs and folk selections had their origin in the early days of cotton hoeing and picking, and at other times when the colored folks were at their daily tasks.

It is said that the new device not only may eliminate the Negro field hand, but also spell the doom of many tenant farmers, or "croppers" as they are generally called down there. The full working of the machine may cause a wholesale migration of colored folks from the south into more industrial areas, and the end of the song in the cotton field, for machines do not have souls and feelings.

### THE COTTON DECLINE

The recent drop in the price of cotton resulted in the usual scramble in Washington and the announcement that an investigation would be forthcoming immediately. However, the promise of an investigation is small comfort for those who suffered from the decline. Even if the investigators discovered some nefarious plot which brought about the drop, there is no assurance that any action would be taken to prevent another.

Secretary Wallace is credited with the following comment after the spectacular break:

"Talk of competition (in cotton production) is propaganda. . . . There is absolutely nothing to this talk of foreign competition. There is not any, except what little cotton comes from Brazil."

Such a statement is all very well for those whose fears are easily allayed by the shout of "propaganda" from Washington. But it so happens that Brazil's present cotton crop is conservatively estimated at 1,250,000 bales, and indications are that the next crop will be 2,000,000 bales.

In addition press dispatches recently have carried reports that American investors are actually beginning to plan to reap the profits from cotton production in Brazil, that they have not only invested money, but are also ordering the most up-to-date farm machinery and ginning equipment from factories in the United States.

Amos S. Pearse, secretary of the International Federation of Master Cotton Spinners Associations, has made extensive surveys of cotton-growing possibilities in all parts of the world, and has made significant observations on the situation in Brazil.

The Nashville Banner sums up his findings as follows:

"No country in the world is better suited to cotton production than Brazil, and there is no crop better suited to the Brazilian soil and climtae than is cotton.

"The area of land in Brazil suitable for the cultivation of cotton is greater than that in the United States.

"Brazil, even without the use of fertilizer, can produce approximately two bales of cotton to one here on a given acreage.

"Brazil has a sudden new-found interest in cotton."

If this be propaganda, then perhaps the undoubted fact that American cotton exports have fallen off at least one-third will serve to make Secretary Wallace realize that the future of cotton in this country is in danger from some source, even if not from Brazil.

The time for cotton growers in this country to act is now. Once Brazil and other countries have established gins and made heavy investments in machinery the time will be too late. At present, we have a distinct advantage in that the necessary investments for cotton-growing have already been made in this country. But once foreign producers get the same advantages, they will be able to force the price downward to such an extent that even further inroads may be made into our present markets.

Secretary Wallace has also said, "If we attempt to escape the depression by cheap temporary means, we must suffer chaos and disintegration."

The same philosophy applies to the present cotton crisis. If the cause of the trouble is more fundamental than has yet been suggested by the efforts of the Federal government, then the real cause must be found and corrected.

The efforts of the government have in reality increased the price of cotton but little. Based on gold values, which is the accepted standard of international exchange, the price of cotton today is only slightly higher than it was in January, 1932.

New Orleans spot cotton was then 6.53 cents. For the past few days New Orleans spot cotton has averaged 11.20 cents. To convert this latter figure into actual gold value of 1932, multiply it by 59.06 per cent. The resulting price of cotton at the present, based on a gold valuation, is 6.61 cents.

In reality, therefore, the price of cotton has advanced only 3 points. For this small advance which may be credited to the efforts of the government, both the farmers and taxpayers have paid dearly.

This fact would seem to refute the arguments of those who claim that the price-pegging of the Federal government has been responsible for our losses.

## BRAZIL THREATENING AMERICA AS LEADER IN COTTON INDUSTRY

### United States Capital Goes To South America In Form Of Modern Machinery

3-13-35

### LIVERPOOL TAKING ACTION

### More Foreign Futures Added To English Market

### PROVIDES FOR HEDGING

**Increased Business Expected To Result From Move—Fiber of Latin Country Substitute For Domestic Staple**

(Copyright, 1935, by United Press)

NEW YORK, March 14.—Brazil may supplant the United States as leader in the cotton industry, Benjamin Adler, cotton expert, of Munds, Winslow & Potter, stock exchange and commodity firm, said today.

Other developments corroborated his statement:

1. Brazilian cables revealed that American cotton men are arriving daily, bringing with them the latest machinery for cotton production, ginning and for textile manufacture.

2. Nils A. Olsen, chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, told the House appropriations committee he believed that there would be "really intensive production of cotton during the next several years in Brazil."

**Liverpool Changing**

3. The Liverpool Cotton Exchange is changing its cotton futures contract to include Brazilian, Peruvian, Argentine and African as well as Nort American cotton. The latter now is the leader. It was said that including of the Brazilian growths would increase purchases of it by London and by the continent, since the market would provide hedging facilties.

Adler, considered one of the nation's foremost authorities on Brazilian cotton, has warned repeatedly of the trend away from the United States to Brazil for cotton. He holds that if the present governmental operations, including curtailment, processing taxes, etc., are not eliminated, the south is in very real danger of losing its principal industry to Brazil. The latter country is encouraging cotton planting, and it has no restrictions such as those prevalent in the United States.

"Brazil's threat to the cotton producing world lies in her low cost, due to a low standard of living," Adler said. "The virtue of her cotton is not in its yield, but in the individual hair or filament strength of the fibers. The 1⅛-inch to 1 3-16-inch cotton from Pernambuco, Parahyba and Rio Grande do Norte, which ceased to be imported after 1923 on account of the seven cents per pound duty on cotton 1⅛ inch or over then imposed, equaled in strength and in color the best qualities of Egyptian uppers, despite the irregularity of staple. The prime fine yarn mills of New Bedford considered it a good substitute."

Adler believes the recent break in cotton prices may be a temporary setback to the Brazilian industry since many of her producers were hulled into a sence of security by the pegged American price and did not hedge their cotton.

...in India, China, and many smaller producing countries, including Egypt.

...Olsen continued, "but in ...shows ...est suited ...area quite well ...large area ...This cotton ...production. ...United States cot... ...ton belt west of the Mississippi River ...er, plus two eastern states."

...Olsen confirmed ...assertions that United States capital had entered Brazil ...formation that it had entered the textile manufacturing field. He insisted that Brazil will be the chief potential field of competition with American cotton, although seeing possibilities of increased cotton pro-

Above Domestic Output

Olsen warned the committee that foreign cotton production in 1934 ex... ...us as though there ...intensive production ...ing the next several ...Olsen made his ...a hearing on the ap... ...for the Department ...and based his view ...published report of ...pert who has just ...study of the Brazilian ...tion.

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"Talk of competition (in cotton production) is propaganda. . . . There is absolutely nothing to this talk of foreign competition. There is not any, except what little cotton comes from Brazil."

Such a statement is all very well for those whose fears are easily allayed by the shout of "propaganda" from Washington. But it so happens that Brazil's present cotton crop is conservatively estimated at 1,250,000 bales, and indications are that the next crop will be 2,000,000 bales.

In addition press dispatches recently have carried reports that American investors are actually beginning to plan to reap the profits from cotton production in Brazil, that they have not only invested money, but are also ordering the most up-to-date farm machinery and ginning equipment from factories in the United States.

Amos S. Pearse, secretary of the International Federation of Master Cotton Spinners Associations, has made extensive surveys of cotton-growing possibilities in all parts of the world, and has made significant observations on the situation in Brazil.

The Nashville Banner sums up his findings as follows:

"No country in the world is better suited to cotton production than Brazil, and there is no crop better suited to the Brazilian soil and climtae than is cotton.

"The area of land in Brazil suitable for the cultivation of cotton is greater than that in the United States.

"Brazil, even without the use of fertilizer, can produce approximately two bales of cotton to one here on a given acreage.

"Brazil has a sudden new-found interest in cotton."

If this be propaganda, then perhaps the undoubted fact that American cotton exports have fallen off at least one-third will serve to make Secretary Wallace realize that the future of cotton in this country is in danger from some source, even if not from Brazil.

The time for cotton growers in this country to act is now. Once Brazil and other countries have established gins and made heavy investments in machinery the time will be too late. At present, we have a distinct advantage in that the necessary investments for cotton-growing have already been made in this country. But once foreign producers get the same advantages, they will be able to force the price downward to such an extent that even further inroads may be made into our present markets.

Secretary Wallace has also said, "If we attempt to escape the depression by cheap temporary means, we must suffer chaos and disintegration."

The same philosophy applies to the present cotton crisis. If the cause of the trouble is more fundamental than has yet been suggested by the efforts of the Federal government, then the real cause must be found and corrected.

The efforts of the government have in reality increased the price of cotton but little. Based on gold values, which is the accepted standard of international exchange, the price of cotton today is only slightly higher than it was in January, 1932.

New Orleans spot cotton was then 6.5[illegible] cents. For the past few days New Orleans spot cotton has averaged 11.20 cents. To convert this latter figure into actual gold value of 1932, multiply it by 59.06 per cent. The resulting price of cotton at the present, based on a gold valuation, is 6.61 cents.

In reality, therefore, the price of cotton has advanced only 3 points. For this small advance which may be credited to the efforts of the government, both the farmers and taxpayers have paid dearly.

This fact would seem to refute the arguments of those who claim that the price-pegging of the Federal government has been responsible for our losses.

## BRAZIL THREATENING AMERICA AS LEADER IN COTTON INDUSTRY

### United States Capital Goes To South America In Form Of Modern Machinery

### LIVERPOOL TAKING ACTION

Memphis,

## More Foreign Futures Added To English Market

## PROVIDES FOR HEDGING

### Increased Business Expected To Result From Move—Fiber of Latin Country Substitute For Domestic Staple

(Copyright, 1935, by United Press)

NEW YORK, March 14.—Brazil may supplant the United States as leader in the cotton industry, Benjamin Adler, cotton expert, of Munds, Winslow & Potter, stock exchange and commodity firm, said today.

Other developments corroborated his statement:

1. Brazilian cables revealed that American cotton men are arriving daily, bringing with them the latest machinery for cotton production, ginning and for textile manufacture.

2. Nils A. Olsen, chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, told the House appropriations committee he believed that there would be "really intensive production of cotton during the next several years in Brazil."

**Liverpool Changing**

3. The Liverpool Cotton Exchange is changing its cotton futures contract to include Brazilian, Peruvian, Argentine and African as well as Nort American cotton. The latter now is the leader. It was said that including of the Brazilian growths would increase purchases of it by London and by the continent, since the market would provide hedging facilties.

Adler, considered one of the nation's foremost authorities on Brazilian cotton, has warned repeatedly of the trend away from the United States to Brazil for cotton. He holds that if the present governmental operations, including curtailment, processing taxes, etc., are not eliminated, the south is in very real danger of losing its principal industry to Brazil. The latter country is encouraging cotton planting, and it has no restrictions such as those prevalent in the United States.

"Brazil's threat to the cotton producing world lies in her low cost, due to a low standard of living," Adler said. "The virtue of her cotton is not in its yield, but in the individual hair or filament strength of the fibers. The 1½-inch to 1 3-16-inch cotton from Pernambuco, Parahyba and Rio Grande do Norte, which ceased to be imported after 1923 on account of the seven cents per pound duty on cotton 1⅛ inch or over then imposed, equaled in strength and in color the best qualities of Egyptian uppers, despite the irregularity of staple. The prime fine yarn mills of New Bedford considered it a good substitute."

Adler believes the recent break in cotton prices may be a temporary setback to the Brazilian industry since many of her producers were lulled into a sence of security by turning more to cotton," Olsen asthe pegged American price and did so. "If the cotton market experiences a revival in demand, it probably will tend to pull the limited la[illegible] in India, China, and many smaller producing countries, including Egypt.

Above Domestic Output

Olsen continued, "but in the production the south our investigation shows that more coffee, but it appears to a very large area quite well suited there may be really to cotton production. This cotton duction of cotton dur[illegible] area equals the United States cotton belt west of the Mississippi River several years."

his statement before Olsen confirmed Representatives that United ne appropriations bill Farver's assertions that Brazil ment of Agriculture States capital had entered Brazil views upon an un[illegible] but said that he had no official inrt of an American ex[illegible] formation that it had entered the just returned from a[illegible] textile manufacturing field. He inrazilian cotton situa[illegible] sisted that Brazil will be the chief potential field of competition with American cotton, although seeing possibilities of increased cotton pro-

see much danger o[illegible]
petition from North

BALTIMORE, MD.
EVENING SUN

FEB 12 1935

# The Revolution In Cotton

By OLIVER CARLSON

[Reprinted in condensed form from the American Mercury]

A SIMPLE mechanical device, the cotton gin, brought about the establishment of the "Cotton Kingdom" in the South, and made a simple plant of the genus *gossypium* the ruler of the lives and destinies of the people living on one-sixth of the land area of the United States.

Another simple device, the mechanical cotton picker, recently perfected, now threatens to effect as great changes among the millions of inhabitants of the Southern States, as did the cotton gin of Eli Whitney 140 years ago. In fact, the resulting upheaval to such a large region, whose social and economic structures have remained virtually "frozen" for more than a century, is startling to contemplate. In every other field of agriculture, technological change has moved forward at a steady and accelerated pace. Not so with cotton. Its first major invention, which was made at the very dawn of the industrial revolution, and which stands as a contemporary with the steam engine, the spinning jenny and the power loom, remained alone in the field until now.

The key to the complete mechanization of cotton lay in the development of a successful picker. Without one little could be done in the cotton belt to make use of tractors, gangplows and other modern implements of agriculture. The net result was a lopsided one: cotton gins have been steadily improved; cotton plants have been improved; soil treatment and cultivation have been improved; but the system of land tenure and of planting, growing and harvesting the crop remains essentially the same today as it was in the days of Thomas Jefferson. Southern agriculture continues to revolve around the same axis that it did a hundred years ago—*hand labor*. The whole social, political and economic structure of the old South still rests upon a tripod whose three legs are "the nigger," the mule and the plow.

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THE abolition of chattel slavery in 1865 did not change the fundamental economic base of Southern life. Cotton continued to dominate the scene. The newly liberated slave was illiterate, penniless and knew no occupation but that of being a drudge in the cotton fields. He was, perforce, compelled to remain on the land of his former masters. The planter, who needed the large supply of labor, agreed to give shelter, food, materials and implements to the Negro, until the crop had been gathered and sold. In turn, the Negro received a certain share of the cotton. In this fashion there developed that vicious concoction known as the Southern tenant or share-cropper system.

The peak-load of work on the cotton farm takes place during the three fall months when the cotton must be picked. The season begins in July, August or September, depending upon how far South the plantation is located. Due to the fact that the cotton bolls ripen unevenly, the field must be picked over an average of three times a year.

From late July till late December the whole of Dixie is a land of cotton pickers. More than 3,000,000 people—most of them colored women and children—are in the fields from early morning till late at night picking the fluffy white bolls and stuffing them into huge bags which they drag behind them. The billion-dollar crop is handpicked almost to its entirety.

Few people realize what a slow and laborious method handpicking is. The average amount picked per day per person throughout the country has remained about the same for the past fifty years, namely one hundred pounds of seed cotton.

Tenancy is stubbornly clung to by the planters so long as an ample supply of cheap labor is at hand, and a minimum outlay is needed for tools, equipment and modern machinery. Many, who did get tractors and other implements, discovered to their sorrow that they had to keep as many tenants as before so that there would be an adequate labor supply at picking time.

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THE last great field of hand labor is now being forced to give way to the machine. The key to the complete mechanization of cotton has been found. The long and arduous path to its solution is strewn with the lives of a thousand unsuccessful inventors. Patent office records show that attempts to develop a mechanical picker or harvester were tried as early as 1857. From that day to this more than 800 patents have been granted in this one field of endeavor alone. Millions of dollars have been spent to develop a successful machine. It is claimed that the International Harvester Company alone has spent $3,000,000 in the forty years that it has been experimenting with this one device. Several other large organizations are known to have expended hundreds of thousands of dollars.

About two years ago one of the most successful and progressive planters in the Delta took me out into a great shed and showed me a number of so-called mechanical pickers. Every one had been a flop. He doubted whether a machine could ever be made to replace his "niggers." But less than two months thereafter, he was one of many planters who saw the Rust Brothers Mechanical Cotton Picker in demonstration at the Delta Experiment Station, Mississippi, where it *picked more cotton in seven and a half hours than is picked by a good hand picker in an entire season of three and one-half months.*

I shall attempt to give a brief description of the newly developed cotton picker. In the first place, it is made as an attachment which can be put on any row-type tractor. Thus the farmer is free to use the tractor for other purposes during the greater part of the year. The machine itself is a simple and inexpensive device consisting primarily of an endless belt carrying several hundred smooth wire spindles. As the machine passes over the row of cotton, the rotating spindles penetrate the plants and the open cotton is wrapped around them and pulled from the burr, after which it is stripped from the spindles and delivered by a suction fan to the container. The fact that the cotton opens unevenly is of no hindrance to the operation of the cotton picker, for it may be passed over the row as often as desired without injury to the stalk or green bolls.

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THE inventors of this new device, John D. Rust and Mack D. Rust, were born and raised on a Texas cotton plantation. From earliest childhood they were compelled to engage in the back-breaking task of picking cotton. John Rust claims that early in life he swore he would some day develop a mechanical picker. He spent many years working as a designer of agricultural implements before he was able to devote himself exclusively to the problem which he had sworn to solve.

Nearly ten years were spent in experimental work after he had solved the main "bug" of a mechanical picker. Tests were first made in the dwarf cotton of Texas. After satisfaction had been obtained there, the inventors moved to Louisiana, where they spent several seasons testing their machine in the tall rank cotton growth of the Mississippi-Yazoo Delta. They arranged to do test picking on large and small plantations in Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee. They asked the most competent agricultural engineers to test the machine in action.

In this way, by field tests throughout the fall and early winter, and by laboratory tests during the remainder of the year, they succeeded in creating a machine that was both simple, inexpensive and very durable. During the season of 1934 only a few machines were manufactured, though the demand for them was great.

Today some of the finest long staple cotton in the world comes from the irrigated lands of California, Arizona and New Mexico. The yield per acre is also higher there than anywhere else in the entire country. But the population is sparse, and picking costs are from sixty per cent. to 125 per cent. higher than is the case in the Old South. The plantations are not operated by share croppers and tenants. Wage labor is employed. It must at times be brought in from cities several hundred miles away. The wage earners differ from the illiterate, docile creatures of the Mississippi Delta. When dissatisfied, they strike at the height of the picking season.

Giant corporations have plantations in the irrigated lands of the Far West which cover tens of thousands of acres. These organizations are vitally interested in a mechanical cotton picker. More than one Western cotton grower has told me that a successful picker would mean the immediate expansion of the Southwestern cotton belt. There is land in abundance, the climate is very nearly perfect, and there are no antiquated systems of land tenure which have to be destroyed in order to reap the full benefits of mechanized cotton culture.

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CONCRETELY, what does all of this mean to the Old South? In the first place, it means that tenant farming, as the dominant mode of agricultural production in cotton, is at the end of its rope. Wage labor will replace tenantry, and from seventy-five per cent. to eighty-five per cent. of all labor now used in growing and fathering the cotton can be eliminated.

It means that great masses of hand pickers who flock into the cotton fields every fall from the cities, towns and villages of Dixie will be unnecessary. Their chief source of income will have been wiped out.

It means to the tenant farmer and share cropper an end to his usefulness. He will not know where to turn nor what to do. The trek of the dispossessed into the nearby urban centers on a scale heretofore unparalleled in American life will undoubtedly follow. Prof. W. F. Ogburn says: "The migration of Negroes to the cities would also be stimulated and this would affect race relations and the future of the Negro race."

To the wide-awake planter, a mechanical cotton picker means a chance to pull himself out of the red and to break the strangle hold of the banker and cotton factor upon himself. He knows from the experiments already conducted in the cotton belt that the difference between production costs of cotton using the one-mule method as against the four-row tractor is the difference between $13.09 and $5.24 per acre. He knows, too, that today it costs him twenty-five per cent. of what he gets for each bale of cotton to have it picked. He sees that the mechanical picker, operated by one man, does the work of a hundred hand pickers, and he can easily estimate the extent of his savings on this single operation.

The planter isn't worried about the social implications of mechanized cotton production—that is to say, he isn't worried about it yet. The same may be said about the tenant, and the small independent cotton farmer. To them the problem has not yet presented itself. Their narrow little world of corn and cotton and sow belly seems to be as eternal as the heavens above. They do not realize that this little world is already tottering. Within two years they will know it all too well—for large scale manufacture of the pickers is a simple matter.

Agriculture - 1935
Condition of

General

## TWO YEARS OF AAA.

Coming by bus, by automobile and by train, delegations of farmers are now moving on Washington to befriend or to criticize AAA. That organization, one of the first of the New Deal agencies to be set up in the feverish Spring of 1933, celebrates its second birthday this week. The task assigned to it two years ago by Congress was to restore a pre-war "parity" between prices of goods the farmer sells and of those he buys. Wheat, cotton, corn and other farm commodities had all fallen much further during the depression than manufactured goods, and the result was a partial paralysis of farm purchasing power.

When the Roosevelt Administration entered office the index number of farm prices, as computed by the Federal Bureau of Agricultural Economics, stood at 55—with 100 representing the pre-war average. On the same scale the index of goods the farmer buys stood at 101. In other words, farm purchasing power was only 54 per cent of the desired "parity." We now find, two years later, that partly because of the effect of NRA on costs of industrial production, prices of goods the farmer buys have risen from 101 to 128. But prices of goods the farmer produces and sells have risen still more rapidly, and now stand at 111. Accordingly, farm purchasing power has now reached 87 per cent of "parity," compared with the 54 per cent existing when the Government changed hands in Washington. That is a remarkable and highly important change within the price structure, though only a rare enthusiast would credit it entirely, or perhaps even primarily, to AAA. Drought, devaluation of the dollar, the natural rebound of prices from a panic level and other influences have all played a part in the result.

Despite the substantially higher prices for farm products now prevailing, AAA finds itself under sharp attack at the end of its second year. Criticism is made of the processing tax, of the risks of stimulating more active foreign competition for world markets, and particularly of the whole philosophy of curtailing farm production. But this philosophy, it is fair to say, is not an invention of the professorial mind running wild in Washington. The enormous surpluses of unwanted farm goods which piled up during the first years of the depression won many friends for the doctrine of curtailment. Thus the Republican party, which now shrinks in horror from the "regimentation" of the farmer, declared in its 1932 platform that "the fundamental problem of American agriculture is the control of production to such volume as will balance supply with demand," and specifically plumped for "control of the acreage of land under cultivation."

Such curtailment, instituted by AAA, rewarded by the payment of cash bounties and reinforced by highly unfavorable crop weather, has largely dissipated many of the huge surpluses which hung over the market in 1932. It is probable that AAA's third year will witness some relaxation of its controls, even without that revival of foreign trade which Secretary WALLACE has always described as the logical alternative to crop restriction.

## Dixie Tenant Union Pickets AAA Offices

WASHINGTON, May 18.—(AP)—The long, marble-fronted agriculture department building was picketed today by union tenant farmers from the south, most of whom Cully A. Cobb, chief of the farm administration's cotton division, said would not know a cotton stalk from a jimpson weed.

Talking to newspapermen while the nine members of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union marched up and down in front of the building protesting the manner in which they said they had been treated by the farm administration, Cobb said the demonstration was instigated by members of radical groups who cared little about the southern tenant farmer.

The delegates said they would confer Monday with senators concerning the pending Bankhead farm tenant rehabilitation bill.

Cobb said the AAA had data to show radical activities of the men who instigated the demonstration that "they seem to resent the improved economic condition brought about by the cotton program because it makes it all the more difficult for them to spread unrest upon which they feed."

## COTTON FARMERS LEAVE HERE TODAY FOR WASHINGTON

### Trainload Going to Capital To Show Approval of Agricultural Adjustment Program.

A "Cotton Farmers' Special" carrying 250 Alabama and Georgia farmers to Washington to express their views on the administration's agricultural adjustment program will leave here over the Southern railroad today.

Numerous county meetings have been held in Georgia recently at which the cotton growers voted their approval of the AAA program and urged continuance of the processing tax.

E. E. Barry, assistant general passenger agent of the Southern railroad, said county agents had made reservations for 350 Georgia and Alabama farmers on a train leaving here at 12:10 p. m. Most of this number is expected to come from Georgia. Many other delegates named at county meetings are expected to make the trip by automobile.

A second section of the regular train leaving here at that time will carry the farmers to the national capital.

### VANGUARD OF FARMERS REACHES WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, May 12.—(AP)—A trek from the dirt roots of farm political thought began trickling into Washington today for a mass demonstration Tuesday in support of the Agricultural Adjustment program.

By automobile, bus and train the pilgrimage—which its organizer estimated would reach 3,000—converged on the capital. Prompting the movement were recent vigorous protests against the cotton processing tax.

"We heard these complaints against the processing tax," said C. H. Day, lanky Texan who promoted the farm march. "We felt the administration needed some support up here.

"This is the first time that the farmers have had such a common cause and we want to offset some of this opposition noise that has been raised by a few of the disgruntled farmers."

**Republican Praises AAA.**

As the first farmers arrived from the west and southwest, they heard a prominent republican spokesman for agriculture, Representative Hope, of Kansas, contend the AAA "has proven its value" and urge farmers to rally to its support.

"I am a republican," Hope said in a radio talk, "but I will support every sound program for agricultural prosperity, no matter by whom presented."

The Kansan said that now the farm program was under attack, it is more important than ever that farmers continue to give the AAA their backing. He asserted the opposition "comes from those who are unwilling to pay the farmer a fair price for his product."

A determined drive by New England and southern textile interests for removal of the cotton processing tax lay back of the farm movement sponsored by Day. New England governors, joined by congressmen, had protested directly to President Roosevelt that the tax, plus mounting Japanese imports, was closing down domestic mills.

The chief executive designated a cabinet committee of four—Secretaries Hull, Wallace, Roper and Perkins—to make a study of the textile situation. This survey still is in progress.

**Bankhead Champion.**

Day, who farms 320 acres in Texas, had asked Secretary Wallace and Chester C. Davis, the AAA administrator, to address the farmers. Senator Bankhead, democrat, Alabama, author of the cotton control act, said he would ask President Roosevelt to greet the pilgrimage.

Wallace only yesterday went into Louisiana, home state, of Senator Long, an outstanding administration critic, and urged farmers to stick by the farm program and its processing taxes.

"I don't know any of the boys who could afford to pay their own way here," Day told newsmen today. "But it seems that the farmers collected in the school houses and passed the hat. Ninety per cent of them wanted to help let the administration know we're satisfied."

Pending on Capitol Hill as the farmers assembled were bills to clarify the AAA law. They would permit the licensing of processors or handlers if more than 20 per cent of any such group favored the step or if two-thirds of the farmers of an area so voted. Provision for an export bounty was included in the house bill.

Hope, in his speech, said attacks on these amendments represented "an attack on the entire farm program."

"I decry the attempt to inject politics into farm relief," he said.

## Movement Headed by RepresentativeMcSwain Has Solid Backing of Georgia Delegation.

By GLADSTONE WILLIAMS.

WASHINGTON, May 18.—(Special.)—Plans for the development of a major rural rehabilitation project in the Piedmont sections of north Georgia and the two Carolinas will be laid before Roosevelt administration officials in connection with the new $4,880,000,000 federal work-relief program, it was revealed here today.

The project, calling for a substantial allotment of the new government funds, contemplates extensive water power development, soil erosion control, farm diversification, rural electrification and other undertakings designed to relieve unemployment.

Sponsoring the comprehensive plan is Representative John McSwain, of South Carolina, chairman of the house military affairs committee and a leading figure in the democratic organization of the lower chamber. Through the Upper Carolina Development Association, the South Carolina house of representatives and other interested agencies he has already outlined to Public Works Administrator Harold L. Ickes a program of "Progressive planning in Piedmont Carolina," which he said today could apply with equal force and advantage to north Georgia.

Members of the Georgia congressional delegations have pledged their co-operation in the movement and at the proper time concerted efforts will be put forth by the three states to have the project adopted.

**Will Offer Wide Relief.**

Representative McSwain believes that the program will meet recommendations of the president's National Resources Board "100 per cent" and will offer relief to the unemployment problem in such operations as the following:

(1) Greatly increase and extend the work of the soil erosion service.

(2) Double the number of Civilian Conservation Corps camps engaged in soil erosion work and in reforestation.

(3) Enlarge and extend the national forests of Georgia and the Carolinas.

(4) Develop at once the potential water power on all rivers and streams of these states, and all other like projects that have been surveyed by United States engineers and found to be feasible from an engineering point of view.

(5) Set up at once farm marketing centers so located that they can take

fruit, vegetables, milk, cream, eggs, chickens, hogs and cattle, and miscellaneous farm products from the farmers to the consumer.

(6) To employ a large number of educated and trained men now unemployed, entirely belonging to the so-called "white-collared class," to go among the farmers and tell them to plant standardized crops of vegetables and be prepared to supply the demands of canneries at farm marketing centers, and also tell the farmers what the development program is so that they may be enabled to get away from the one-crop system of cotton "which has impoverished them, being on the very fringe of the cotton belt."

(7) Push the work of rehabilitation of stranded families in the cities and industrial centers by putting them out on the farms.

(8) Assist and enourage those who are now upon the land, but as tenant farmers and are prosperous as such, to buy land while land is cheap and buy it on long terms and at low rates of interest.

(9) Assist counties in the procurement of terracing machinery with which to terrace the lands of the farmers at the actual cost of such work whereby the original cost of the machinery may be refunded to the county.

**Urges Georgia Support.**

"This program," said Representative McSwain, "is all-inclusive and I feel that Georgia should pool her interest in it with the Carolinas. It's a section-wide program for constructive rural rehabilitation which cannot fail to benefit city, town and country.

"Everyone knows the tremendous benefits that have come to the Tennessee valley from the federal treasury through activities of the TVA, and I believe there is equally great need, with greater prospects for success to follow, from development of the Piedmont sections of the three states involved. The prospects are better for the following reasons: These sections have considerable manufacturing which will furnish a large market for diversified products; we have soil well adapted to production of fruits, vegetables and dairy products; we have direct railroad connections with the great centers of population in the north; and a progressive white, Anglo-Saxon population of 100 per cent native-born.

"Our program includes soil erosion control through an active co-operation between our farmers, CCC boys and the soil erosion service. It also includes the development of water-power so as to encourage rural electrification thus making country life more attractive; the development of farm marketing centers where all products of the soil may be sold any day of the year at prevailing market prices, and these products assembled and prepared for the market, and shipped.

"If and when the program is put into effect it is our purpose to employ a large number of farm demonstration agents—both men and women—to keep constantly in touch with all our farmers, to assist them in producing those crops to which our farmers are not accustomed. For instance, various fruits, vegetables and dairy products can be produced in the Piedmont sections of our states without any difficulty if our farmers are shown the way by experienced hands."

Mr. McSwain has submitted scientific data to the congress through which he has demonstrated from facts ascertained by agricultural experts that vegetables grown in the Piedmont sections contain a much larger percentage of iodine, iron, copper and manganese than vegetables grown in sections of the country where these products are considered particularly adaptable to the soil.

**Back-to-the-Farm Move.**

Continuing, Representative McSwain declared:

"Our program also contemplates the assisting of stranded families in cities and industrial centers to become self-sustaining on farm lands, and ultimately helped to purchase their own farms."

He explained that every federal agency to which he had already appealed for aid in carrying out his program had expressed a deep interest.

"Officials to whom I have outlined my plan have told me that they hoped some co-ordinated service might be set up so that there would be no duplication of effort," Mr. McSwain said. "I have advised Public Works Administrator Harold L. Ickes, Relief Administrator Harry Hopkins, and other work-relief officials that no better way could be devised for using the $4,880,000,000 work-relief fund than through building marketing centers which would include canneries, creameries, packing houses, cold storage facilities and assembly plants for poultry, eggs, nuts and miscellaneous farm products."

Just now, Representative McSwain and his co-workers are waiting upon Frank Walker, head of the applications and information division of the work-relief set-up to formulate regulations that will govern allotments, and for President Roosevelt to issue an executive order which will release the $4,880,000,000 for allocation purposes.

As justification for his request that the federal government embark upon employment work that would carry out his program, Mr. McSwain has cited the president's National Resources Board, which on December 17, 1934, published an exhaustive report in which there is found a remarkable similarity and identity between the chief executive's plans for recovery and the plan proposed by the South Carolinian.

Under the heading, "Agricultural Land Use," the National Resources Board had this to say of the southeastern hilly cotton and tobacco region (including also Tidewater, Virginia):

"Major adjustments advocated are: (1) Widespread, but not general, withdrawal of some of the arable farming, converting land withdrawn to constructive use (mainly forest); (2) introduction of erosion-control measures in the better farming areas; (3) institution of constructive management of forest land; (4) modifications in tenure or financial status of holdings; (5) establishment of larger operating units in the interest of erosion control and adequate farm income."

Nashville, Tenn. Tennessean
March 21, 1935

# Tenant System Seen as Curse Of Cotton Growers in South

NEW YORK, March 20—(AP)—Drastic readjustments of the South's "executive devotion to cotton, its land tenure system, its out-moded credit system, and the peculiar economic status assigned the lowest level negro farmers" were recommended in a summarized report made public today by the committee on minority groups in the economic recovery.

The committee is composed of Edwin R. Embree of Chicago, president of the Julius Rosenwald fund; Dr. Will W. Alexander of Atlanta, director of the commission on interracial cooperation, and Professor Charles S. Johnson, head of the department of social research of Fisk University, Nashville.

Its 250-page report followed a year's study of agricultural, economic, and social conditions in the South, which was financed by $50,000 from the Rosenwald foundation.

The report was submitted to the department of agriculture a month ago, Embree and Dr. Alexander said, but was not made public then. It also has been brought to the attention of President Roosevent, they said.

"With declining exports and increasing foreign cotton production, the South stands face to face with a choice," the committee found.

"It may choose continued regimentation of agricultural production, with subsidies for released lands and relief for displaced tenants and agricultural laborers.

"Or it may decide that this is too great a price to pay for concentrated land ownership. In such a case America might well follow the example of Ireland and Denmark and embark upon a program of government aid to peasant proprietorship."

The committee emphasized that the South's problem was not a negro problem but one of tenants and share-croppers, both white and black, "in a state of peonage that approaches slavery."

"As a matter of fact, the negro no longer furnishes the bulk of cotton tenants," the report asserts. "There are 1,091,944 white tenants in the South to 698,839 colored tenants. While one may not be surprised to note that over half the negro tenants are croppers, it is startling to learn that over one-third of the white tenants are in the same poverty-stricken class.

"White tenancy is increasing. From 1920 to 1930, a period of increasing difficulty in cotton production, negro tenants in the South decreased by some 2,000, while white tenants increased by more than 200,000."

Commenting on the report, Embree said the committee regards the Bankhead bill now before Congress as "an utterly adequate solution of the situation." He estimated that it would provide small farms up to 40 acres for 500,000 families plus homes, livestock, and feed.

"These people could grow most of what they need," he said, "and get some cash by raising a few bales of cotton, too."

The committee's own summary of its findings sets forth these figures:

"Against an average of 42 per cent for the entire country, 58 per cent of the 3,088,111 farms in the 13 cotton states are worked by tenants, the prevalence of tenacy running to 71 per cent in the case of cotton farms and in certain black belt regions to 80 per cent.

"Half of these tenants are 'share croppers' owning neither land nor capital, livestock nor tools and wholly dependent for these on their landlords.

In Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky and the nine coast states from Texas to Virginia—the regions covered by the study—one family in every four was on relief last year, and expenditures for them totaled $212,561,552, of which 96 per cent came from the federal government.

In urging transition from the South's devotion almost exclusively to cotton, the report says that a system of general or all-around farming could be introduced both speedily and easily at this time, thereby releasing a farm population of 16,000,000 from "as meager a diet of fatback, corn pone, and molasses under as extortionate a credit system as can be found in the world's agriculture."

**FACTS, NOT FANCIES**

To The Commercial Appeal:

The South is the financial thermometer of the United States.

When the south is prosperous, the whole country prospers.

Why?

Because the south has never learned to hoard. We earn money to enjoy the good things that money can buy.

When cotton—the financial lifeblood of the south—is 10 cents a pound, we buy everything that the rest of the United States has to sell. Prices go up everywhere.

For we not only buy, but we travel, and spend freely.

And, bear in mind, nearly all this cash comes (I should say came) from foreign countries.

The mills of America consume only a small proportion of our normal cotton crop. We could raise twice as much cotton—and scatter over the land—twice as much cool cash as we did in 1929.

For the benefit of the whole country, should not our government exert every effort to increase the demand for cotton—instead of doing all it can to discourage raising cotton?

The south must be freed of the greed tariff wall—that has almost stifled it, and be permitted to win back its foreign trade in the markets of the world.

As soon as cotton is once more "king," there will be ready sale for all wheat, pigs, poultry, fruits, vegetables, manufactured goods—everything that can be raised or made.

The wheels of industry everywhere will begin to turn. For the south will again attract foreign capital—so long shut out—and freely distribute it over the Union. Confidence will be restored, and men will "talk commerce," instead of war.

A. CHATTERER.

Greenville, Miss.

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# Blind Negro, Heeding Injunction of Bible, Pulls Plow Under Wife's Guidance at Albany

Literal interpretation of the Biblical injunction that man shall live "by the sweat of his brow" has caused Hanson McCoy, 63, blind negro residing near Albany, to assume the burden of a beast in pulling his plow while his wife holds the handles. For one thing, he hopes his thrift will help get him off the relief rolls. (Associated Press photo.)

ALBANY, Ga., Feb. 28.—(AP)—Hitched to a plow, 63-year-old Hansom McCoy, a blind negro, paused at the end of a long furrow, freshly turned, and commented:

"The Bible says we have to live by the sweat of our brows, and that is what I am doing."

Guiding the plow was his wife, Sallie Anderson McCoy, who said she and her husband were teaming up now, as they had done for many years, to eke out a living from the soil.

McCoy smiled as he spoke and said he was working toward the day when he would no longer find it necessary to get his corn meal, salt pork, coffee and other foodstuffs from relief agencies.

Although blind for 30 years, he said it had been only during the last three years that he has had "to be on the county."

His wife guides him by her voice. She said they had been offered a mule, but rejected the offer because McCoy was willing to work, and "I couldn't plow no mule."

Last year McCoy made a little money on his cotton. He is to plow one and one-half acres for cotton this year. He also raised a good corn crop—a better crop, folks in the community say, than was grown by some other farmers. Near his house the ground has been broken for planting of corn, potatoes and cane.

McCoy and his wife live on land furnished them by Henry Nelms, a farmer. He also is lending them the use of a house and has told them they may have as much land as they can work. McCoy said he would help pay for use of the land by "building it up."

Hansom McCoy is working.

He says he wants to get "off the relief."

**RETIRING SUB-MARGINAL LAND**

Announcement that 100,000 acres of sub-marginal land in Baldwin, Wilkinson, Hancock, Jones, Twiggs and Grady counties will be purchased by the federal government and retired from cultivation comes coincident with the statement that the retirement by July 1 of 15,000,000 acres of land throughout the country is contemplated as a phase of the $4,800,000,000 work-relief program.

Four million acres are already under option and the program calls for the eventual purchase of 75,000,000 acres unsuitable for cultivation and which will be turned by the government into recreational, reforestation or game sanctuary areas.

The unhealthy conditions that have developed in American agriculture are largely due to the unsound distribution of our farm population. Millions of farmers are eking a miserable existence out of barren acres while huge areas of fertile land are lying idle in every section of the country.

The stony mountain areas and the low-lying swamp lands have been designated as sub-marginal land by the government, and it is hoped to transfer them from private to public ownership in order that they will be permanently retired from cultivation and, as park areas, made to serve a good purpose.

Despite Georgia's pre-eminence as an agricultural state, the evil of uneconomic distribution of the agricultural population exists here to as great an extent as in any other state. Thousands of acres of ground are being tilled that are not fit for cultivation, while there are hundreds of rich farms in practically every county lying idle, and other thousands of acres that have never been cultivated.

The readjustment of Georgia's farm population is more vitally important than in the case of other states because the opportunity for successful farming exists to a greater extent here than in most of the other sections of the country. For this reason the state government and the members of the Georgia delegation in congress should co-operate in the program of land retirement planned under the $4,800,000,000 work-relief activities.

Investigation to determine whether a change can be made in the method of collecting the cotton processing tax, a source of major dissatisfaction among southern textile manufacturers, was promised by Wright Matthews, assistant collector of internal revenue, on a visit to Atlanta yesterday.

Mr. Matthews, who is first assistant to Guy T. Helvering, United States collector of internal revenue in Washington, visited the offices of W. E. Page, Atlanta collector, while on a semi-official tour of internal revenue offices in the southern states. He is en route to his home in Palestine, Texas.

Textile manufacturers of Georgia have complained, not so much against the processing tax, as the method of collecting it. Under the present setup, the tax of 4 1-2 cents a pound is assessed as soon as a bale of cotton is opened in the textile plant. The manufacturer then has 60 days in which to pay the assessment.

Georgia mill owners have suggested to Mr. Page that if the procedure could be changed so that the tax is assessed at the time the bale is opened but not collected until the finished product is sold, it would relieve them of a great burden.

In discussing the matters with the Atlanta internal revenue collector, Mr. Matthews expressed the opinion congressional action might be necessary to bring about a change in procedure, but promised to investigate the situation.

Mr. Matthews said he thought most of the agitation against the processing tax came from the east and most of the clamor against it was being made by "mill owners who are trying to undersell their competitors who are playing fair and paying their processing tax."

Georgia should be in favor of the tax, inasmuch as more processing tax money is paid to Georgia cotton growers than is collected from textile manufacturers of the state, Mr. Matthews declared.

Mr. Page informed his superior there have been 99.73 per cent collections of processing taxes of all kinds and there has been less trouble and less grumbling about paying this type of tax than any other.

A luncheon honoring Mr. Matthews was given in the Capital City Club yesterday noon, attended by a number of Atlanta's leading citizens.

Leaving Atlanta, the assistant tax collector will go to Birmingham, Austin, Dallas, Little Rock, Jacksonville, and other southern cities.

## NEW DAY FOR FARMING

The chief objectives of the Rural Resettlement Administration, as outlined by Regional Director Wehrner as "the increase of crop yields, the reduction of operating costs and the production of crops Georgia farmers have not been able to grow heretofore," if realized may revolutionize farming conditions in the state.

No state in the Union is potentially richer from an agricultural standpoint than Georgia, but because our farmers have never entirely thrown off the single-crop yoke and have failed to adopt modern methods of cultivation, other states less favored by nature have taken the lead in farming.

The majority of Georgia's farmers are still a quarter of a century behind the times in the conduct of their business. They have yet to realize that agriculture, like industry and commerce, has undergone changes that spell certain failure for those who believe that methods that were good enough for their fathers are good enough for them.

Working in co-operation with the Agricultural Extension Service, the RRA will launch a plan that "will enable farmers on sub-marginal lands to move to more profitable farms; will see community depots established so farmers will be able to avail themselves of heavy farm machinery and blooded livestock for breeding purposes; diversification of crops will be encouraged so farmers will raise more than one 'money' crop, and crop yields will be increased while operating expenses are cut."

The program strikes at the basic troubles that have held back Georgia agriculture while the farmers of more progressive states have progressed.

While comparatively few of Georgia's hundreds of thousands of farmers will be directly affected by the resettlement program, they will prove the leaven that will work toward bringing about the reforms in production and marketing methods necessary if Georgia is to assume ranking position among the agricultural states of the Union, to which the state is entitled.

# Pleas From Cotton Farmers Are Made Public by Talmadge

Governor Talmadge yesterday made public the following letters from Georgia farmers asking his assistance in combatting the United States Department of Agriculture's cotton program as pertaining to their individual farms:

"Governor Eugene Talmadge,
"Atlanta, Ga.

"Dear Sir:

"Just a few lines for your advice on a little cotton problem which I hope you will help me solve, which happens to be my own.

"I live in a place which has been laying out until two years before this cotton reduction problem came along. So last year, the district committeemen came to see me. They would not rent any land at all, but put it in as a new place.

"The place had only been making two bales of cotton. So last fall, when I got my certificate, I only got 555 pounds of lint cotton. That was for me and my landlord both, as I rent third and fourth.

"So this year, I did not hear from the government at all, or anyone else concerning my cotton crop, but about a month ago the district committeemen were measuring some cotton ground of my neighbor. He told me I had better sign up or I could not sell any cotton. That was Friday. He said wait until Monday. All the others had received a card when to come and signf or their cotton tax-exemption certificate.

"So Monday early I went to Gainesville at the time they said was set before. I asked the county agent why I did not receive a card. He said he didn't know, but that they wouldn't fix any papers, so I got a little raw, but held my temper pretty well. Finally they got their record book. They did not have the place or my name on the book, so they got in a hurry to fix up some papers.

"When I was at Gainesville two weeks ago, the district committeeman told me they were all right and he would be here soon Monday to measure the cotton I have in. That has been two weeks ago, and he has not come yet.

"As I have more confidence in you I want your advice on what to do I try to make an honest living for my family, but am not getting a fair deal.

"As ever your friend,

(Signed)
"HENRY L. BUTTERWORTH,
"R. F. D. No. 4,
"Gainesville, Ga."

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"Gov. Eugene Talmadge,
"Atlanta, Ga.

"Dear Sir:

"I am in distress over my cotton. I was allotted 14 acres to plant, and I will make 10 bales of cotton, and can't sell but 1,300 pounds tax-free—and it won't pay my rent.

"If there is any way that you can help me, I will gladly appreciate it to the highest esteem.

"If you don't want to take my word for it, I will send you the papers I have.

"Yours truly,
(Signed) "M. T. BRYANT,
"Cochran, Ga., R. F. D. 3."

### DEFENSE OF NEW DEAL

To the Editor of The Telegraph:

You should have headed your editorial on the processing tax, of the 12th instant, to read: Calling All Farmers! Calling All Farmers! to return to six cents cotton, $9 per ton seed, two cent hogs, 30 per cent interest on borrowed money, $10 per ton higher price on the stuff they use for fertilizer, poverty, misery and all the other ills that are attendant on the above mentioned conditions.

As a supposed molder of public opinion, why don't you try to do your molding in a fair and unbiased manner? Why not tell the public of the good that is being done with the processing tax as administered by the AAA? Why not remind the farmer, if you wish to be fair, of the rental checks he has received, the parity payments he has been given for keeping his land out of cotton? If you do not know these benefits, you are to be excused, but you should at least get all the information on both sides of the question before you attempt to destroy what is now being done to help the farmer through crop control, processing tax, regimentation, or whatever you are pleased to call it. You can get this information from your county agent's office. You might learn from him also, if you are a farmer and have more cotton than your allotment, that you can buy your gin certificates for five cents and not six cents per pound.

From the Governor's letters you print a typical example. Allow me to give you an example with no politics attached: First, a small farmer, a Negress who owns a small tract of land—a dry weather farm, you might say. Dry years she makes a crop; wet years bring about crop failure. So, in addition to her farm, she rents 15 acres of land for $40 cash to make out a one-horse farm. Her allotment is around three bales of cotton. AAA pays her $35 to keep a certain number of acres of this land out of cotton. Can't you figure that this Negress is getting along better than formerly, even if she made eight bales of cotton?

Another typical case, and non-poiltical: A widow. Her allotment is about the same as the Negress'. Through boll weevil infestation this year, her cotton crop is a failure, but AAA will pay her five cents per pound for cotton she failed to make.

Anything wrong in a system that works and works like this? If you have a better system, let's have it. You are not in politics, not enough to hurt, anyway, so speak out and give the farmer a workable plan that will save him from the evils of low prices for farm products.

You have preached for years, your predecessor preached the doctrine before you, of diversified farming. Less cotton was your battle cry year in and year out. Now that we have a man at the head of our Government, National, I mean, who had the wisdom to figure out a plan for the farmer to practice diversification and pay him cash on the barrel head to do so, you are not satisfied.

You editorialized sometime ago, sarcastically, that the farmers wanted the Government to guarantee them 15 cents per pound for their cotton, and let them plant all of their land they could work, in cotton. You write now as if you had turned farmer and want the same thing. Do you? If not, everybody else has a plan to save the farmer, so you might state yours. Pretty good idea you know, if you can't start your car, stop racing your engine. Hope you get the point.

Please let me observe this before you choke me: Noticed in the press a day or two ago where a gent up in the banking world stated the bankers of the country can now begin to smile. I guess it has passed out of his ever so astute mind, that the fellow who has a little cash in bank has been able to smile ever since the day President Roosevelt made honest-to-goodness, especially honest, bankers out of the banker.

B. B. STEVENS.
Stevens Crossing, Ga.

# Yearling Killed To Recover Bill Eaten by Animal

SANDERSVILLE, Ga., Sept. 19.—George D. Jones of Warthen, 10 miles from here, tells this story of a yearling calf, a vest, and a five-dollar bill:

While Jones was recently supplying beeves for one of the Sandersville markets, he was approached by a Negro friend who was anxious to sell a yearling. When he told the Negro that he did not need the beef that day the darkey repeated his desire to have the yearling killed at once.

The colored man replied to questioning that he had left his vest hanging in the sun, and that the yearling had chewed and swallowed the vest, which had a five-dollar bill in the pocket. He agreed to sell the yearling for five dollars.

Thereupon, the calf was slaughtered, and after careful examination, the money was recovered, with only one end of the note having been chewed off. Now the darkey has two five-dollar bills.

# NEGRO PLANTERS GATHERING TODAY

## Bibb Farmers Will Study 1936 Program at Two-Day Session in Stewart's Chapel

Negro farmers of Bibb county and their wives will be presented an outline for their 1936 program in a series of discussions to be held in Stewart chapel starting at 10 a.m. today. The session will continue tomorrow.

The conference has been called by S. H. Lee, Negro agent for Bibb Monroe and Lamar counties, to assist the farm men and women in planning for the coming year.

A number of prominent speakers will be on the program including H. A. Hunt, formerly of Fort Valley and now assistant to the governor of the Production Credit Administration in Washington. George Hayes and Nelson Mallary of Macon will speak of farm loans and credit extension.

F. M. Stanley of the Georgia State Industrial college will speak of the education of Negro boys and girls. Arthur Gannon, extension poultryman of the state college, will discuss poultry, and 4-H club members will tell of their progress in poultry raising.

### Wednesday's Program

On the second day record keeping, meat curing and care of shrubbery will be discussed. D. F. Bruce, county agricultural agent, will speak of the cotton program and H. W. Harvey, landscape architect, will demonstrate care of trees and shrubs.

A part of the afternoon program will be devoted to a play, The Trial of Mr. Soil Robber, in which students of Central City college will take part.

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# SAY RACE FARMER INTERESTED ROOSEVELT IN LOW INTEREST

WASHINGTON, Jan. 3—(By ANP)—According to a story going the rounds here, the experiences of President Roosevelt with a colored farmer in Georgia, are largely responsible for his determination to establish low interest rates.

A story is repeated which the President is quoted as having told first. It tells of a colored farmer who came to the President's home in Warm Springs, Ga., and sought to borrow $200 with which to purchase a team of mules, some seed and other accessories. He told the President that if he borrowed the money in his county, they'd pile up interest charges on him so that he would be paying 12 per cent.

The President let the farmer have the money at four per cent interest and it was all repaid.

# Georgia Vegetable Growers Association Is Formed Here as 300 Attend Meeting

## Principal Aim to Grow Products on Acres Barred From Cotton Under Control Plan

With one of its principal aims the growing of vegetables on acres that must be barred from cotton under the crop control plan, the Georgia Vegetable Growers Association was formed here yesterday.

About 300 growers of truck crops met in the Hotel Dempsey, elected R. F. Sams, Jr., of Clarkston president, and took other action to insure speedy formation of local units, sectional, county and more-than-one-county wide, all members to join the state group.

Three vice presidents were chosen: F. W. Schroer of Valdosta, Reid McNamara of Savannah, and D. A. Russell of Avondale. In addition two directors were named: C. C. Thrasher of Ashburn and Cator Woolford of Atlanta. Other directors will be added later, one from each local association.

Speakers during the all-day session yesterday emphasized the facts that cotton production is waning; that a new crop must be found for southeastern acres; that imports of truck crops into Georgia average $50,000,000 annually, which is practically equal in value to the total Georgia cotton crop.

### Advisory Council Named

During the afternoon session, in addition to election of officers, the following were chosen on the state advisory council: H. G. Hastings, Atlanta; W. T. Anderson, Macon; Ivan Allen, Atlanta; Fred Hand, Pelham; Col. T. L. Huston, Darien; Haynes McFadden, Atlanta; R. H. Freeman, Jr., Macon; Mrs. H. B. Ritchie, Atlanta; Roland Turner, Atlanta; B. F. Vinson, Atlanta; Scott Allen, Atlanta; Sam A. Nunn, Perry; Col. E. B. Weatherly, Cochran; L. W. Gray, Atlanta; W. J. Vereen, Moultrie; E. George Butler, Savannah; T. Guy Woolford, Atlanta; John Allen, Fort Valley.

Officers and directors were chosen on a slate nominated by a committee consisting of C. H. Bishop, Atlanta; L. C. Mura, Augusta, and E. P. Clark, Lithonia.

Speakers during the morning and afternoon sessions stressed these facts: that apparently a market exists in the state for large supplies of vegetables of good quality, that these can be produced in Georgia and that principal needs at present are better standards of grading and packing, with more thorough supervision of distribution and marketing methods.

### Another Session Planned

Mr. Sams announced a meeting of officers, directors and advisory council in Atlanta Feb. 27, to consider organization plans, and named a committee to confer with legislators on the bill now pending to establish farmers' markets in the state. This committee includes C. H. Bishop, of Atlanta; J. J. Parrish, of Adel; F. W. Schroer, of Valdosta, and the president.

A committee was named to draw the constitution and by-laws, consisting of George Firor, Athens, chairman; Reid McNamara, Savannah; C. G. Garner, Athens, and D. A. Russell, Avondale.

Several speakers during the day's two sessions expressed the opinion that Georgia farmers can produce vegetables in sufficiency for Georgia needs, but that the principal work must be "education on standards of packing, grading and packaging." It was also said that a state association is needed to direct distribution and marketing of the acceptable produce.

### About 300 Present

The morning session yesterday was opened with invocation by Dr. W. R. Mackay, pastor of the First Presbyterian church. About 200 farmers were in the Hotel Dempsey convention hall to hear his words and within a few minutes about 100 more had filed in to take part in the organization movement.

Mr. Sams, who is also president of the American Vegetable Growers Association, presided over the meeting. The delegates were welcomed by W. T. Anderson, Macon newspaper publisher, who discussed general farm problems in the southeast, and asserted that "annually about 30 million acres of our best land is bringing the farmers no return, because of the old cotton system."

"We plant 45 million acres to cotton and get 15 million bales," he observed. "We ought to get, and can get, a bale to the acre, which means that not only are we getting no return from those extra 30 million acres, but would be better off to leave them idle because of cultivation costs."

He said that vegetables worth somewhere near 50 milion dollars, annually shipped into Georgia from other states, probably could be produced in this state "on our old cotton land," and a fair cotton crop still be made.

### Development Work

He also referred to President Roosevelt's plan for decentralization of industry, out of which has grown the Southeastern Development Board, with its aim to establish small industrial enterprises throughout the Southeast. Workers in these plants would provide an extensive market for truck crops, he observed.

Mr. Sams was next on the program (his speech in full follows at the end of this story) and then he called on three "practical vegetable growers" for five-minute talks. They were D. A. Russell of Avondale, who advised farmers not experienced in production of vegetables for market to "grow into the business, and not go into it suddenly on a big scale"; R. J. Johnston of Macon, who said main needs of the growers are statewide standards and marketing assistance; F. W. Schroer of Valdosta, who told how he came to this country from Germany in 1907, and "a little bit at a time" has built up his plant and vegetable business in Lowndes county until now it grosses about $100,000 a year.

### Atlanta's Market

C. H. Bishop, manager of the Sears, Roebuck farmers' market in Atlanta, said food dealers of the state "are clamoring for a dependable supply of Georgia products that have been properly graded and packed."

"There is no reason," he asserted, "why Georgia dealers should pay freight on products of distant origin, when they could get the same quality, in sufficient quantity, fresh from farms in this state."

Mr. Bishop's speech was considered of such interest to Georgia farmers that it was announced it will be printed in full in next Sunday's Telegraph and News, and complimentary copies of the issue will be sent to each delegate registered at today's meeting.

### History of Sowega

J. J. Parrish of Adel, secretary of the Sowega Melon Growers' Association, outlined the history of that organization and said similar success should attend association of state truck growers along proper lines.

When the Sowega was formed in 1920, he said, melon shipments from Georgia totaled 9,000 cars and the producers got an average of only $64.65 per carload. The freight rate was about $185 a car to large eastern cities, and because of high retail prices a carload often cost the consumer $750.

Since the association has been functioning the farmer gets a much larger share of the consumer's dollar, and at the same time there has been substantial reduction in the retail price on eastern markets. The organization now has more than 3,000 members and ships up to 25,000 cars annually.

Ivan Allen, Atlanta merchant and

R. F. Sams, Jr., of Clarkston, named yesterday to head the new Georgia Vegetable Growers' Association, is shown above as he presided at the organization meeting here at which approximately 300 of the state's vegetable growing interests were present. On the right is C. H. Bishop, manager of the Sears, Roebuck farmers' market in Atlanta, one of the principal speakers on the day's program. Photo is by Metro.

financier, in the next talk impressed his listenerers with the statement: "I have one message: Give the American people more package."

**Knows Georgia Products**

He explained that he is not a farmer and has never even lived on a farm, but that as a merchant and business man he does know Georgia farm products are not packaged properly, including grading.

"You farmers don't seem to realize the value of cellophane and fancy labels," he said. "My counsel is to put your produce in more attractive containers, even if it should be necessary to cut down on the amount of the produce. There are great numbers of articles enjoying tremendous sales in this country today, of which the package costs more than the contents."

Mr. Allen was introduced by Cator Woolford, Atlanta financier, who termed him one of the country's greatest merchandising experts.

Harry L. Brown, director of the Georgia agricultural extension service, said vegetable growers may be assured of support from federal and state farm agents in any co-operative plan designed to improve the farmers' condition.

**Cotton Shrinking**

He said cotton is a shrinking crop, and that "a good part of our old cotton land must be used in future for other crops." He said vegetable-growing holds promise, because at present imports of such crops by Georgia amount to about 50 million dollars more than exports each year.

R. R. Hammond, manager of the Savannah wholesale produce market, made a plea that inferior produce and "itinerant truck operators" be barred from markets of the state.

H. P. Stuckey spoke briefly on how a state association can improve the lot of farmers generally, and on motion of R. J. Johnston of Macon, Chairman Sams appointed a nominating committee composed of C. H. Bishop, Atlanta; L. C. Mura, Augusta, and E. P. Clark, Lithonia. This committee will report a slate of officers during the afternoon session.

Delegates to the meeting had luncheon in the hotel at 1 p. m. and began their afternoon session with general discussion of plans for the new organiation. The invocation for the morning session was given by Dr. W. R. Mackay, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church.

The following, called "The Georgia Plan" for Vegetable Growers, was presented in a talk by R. F. Sams, Jr.:

"The most vital problem of Georgia today, is that of securing agricultural prosperity. All of us here realize the vital importance to everyone, of having more agricultural prosperity in our state. We are blessed with soil and climate, capable of yielding a large variety of high quality crops. I understand that we can grow more different crops in Georgia than any other state. We could easily produce an abundance of material things necessary for the health and happiness of many times the population we now have. In the face of all these natural advantages, an editorial in the Atlanta Constitution day before yesterday informs us that $50,000,000 was sent outside our state last year for fruits and vegetables, most of which could have been grown here. This is more money than we received for our cotton.

"Cotton is being displaced by substitutes, like rayon from pine trees, so fast that it becomes increasingly necessary for us to learn to grow and market other crops in its place. The growing and marketing of vegetables has been neglected more than any other type of farming, and one of our greatest opportunities to help prosperity in Georgia, is by educating and helping our farmers along this line.

# Blind Negro And Wife Teaming To Beat Depression

ALBANY, GA., Feb. 27.—(AP)—Hitched to a plow, 63-year-old Hansom McCoy, blind negro, paused at the end of a long furrow, freshly turned, and commented.

"The Bible says we have to live by the sweat of our brows, and that is what I am doing."

Guiding the plow was his wife, Sallie Anderson McCoy, who said she and her husband were teaming up now, as they had done for many years, to eke out a living from the soil.

McCoy smiled as he spoke and said he was working toward the day when he would no longer find it necessary to get his corn meal, salt pork, coffee and other foodstuffs from relief agencies.

Although blind for 30 years, he said it had been only during the last three years that he has had "to be on the county."

He is a man of medium size, but his wife says "he is a mighty powerful man." He has to be to pull a plow through land laced with grass roots.

His wife guides him by her voice. She said they had been offered a mule, but rejected the offer because McCoy was willing to work, and "I couldn't plow no mule."

Last year McCoy made a little money on his cotton. He is to plow one and one-half acres for cotton this year. He also raised a good corn crop—a better crop, folks in the community say, than was grown by some other farmers.

McCoy and his wife live on land furnished them by Henry Nelms, a farmer. He also is lending them the use of a house and has told them they may have as much land as they can work. McCoy said he would help pay for use of the land by "building it up."

## *Proud to Pull a Plow*

This country would soon sail out of the doldrums if there were a few more people like Hansom McCoy and his wife, Sallie, down in Daugherty county.

Hansom is a Negro, 63 years old, and has been blind 30 years. In spite of his affliction he has always managed to get along until the past three years, when he had to "go on relief". But he has his mule and he has decided that this year he will come off relief, and so, day by day, he is hitched to a plow and his wife holds the plow-handles, directing her husband to "gee" and "haw" with her voice.

McCoy was in great good humor when he was visited by a newspaper correspondent. There was nothing to show that he felt it a hardship to have to take the place of Maude or Dobbin in walking over the fields to turn a furrow, and his wife was equally cheerful. Both figured that with any kind of cooperation on the part of the weather man they could get their "corn meal, salt pork, coffee and foodstuffs," as they expressed it, without having to depend on federal relief. They had an acute sense that it was charity and they were tired of living on charity.

As a matter of fact, the two Negroes were offered a mule, but refused it. Hansom said, "I can work and I can't plow no mule".

Last year McCoy made a little money on his cotton. He is to plow one and one-half acres for cotton this year. He also made a good corn crop—a better crop than was grown by many other farmers who had good eyes, according to reports. Near his home ground has been broken this year for corn, potatoes and cane.

McCoy and his wife live on land furnished them by Henry Nelms, a white farmer, who is also giving them the use of a house and has told them they can have as much land as they can work. McCoy said he would help pay for the use of the land "by building it up".

Perhaps nowhere in this country has there been a more inspiring lesson than this. The Negro, who is already nearly old enough to qualify for an old-age pension, seems to think nothing of the burdens time has placed upon him and nothing of the blindness he has had to endure practically half his life. It did not prevent him from making a living until the depression got to the very depths and he isn't waiting until the Federal Government takes official notice that it is over. He has his own ideas as to when it should be over and he is going to do his part towards bringing about that consummation.

The average man who complains of his lot should feel ashamed of himself when he reads the story of blind Hansom McCoy and his wife, Sallie, whose cheerful determination rises above all handicaps.

Atlanta, Ga. Constitution
May 12, 1935

# BIBB FARMERS FAVOR PROCESSING TAX LEVY

MACON, Ga., May 11.—(AP)—A sales tax, though "quite repulsive," is the "only fair way to make everyone who uses cotton in any form" pay part of the money in the cotton benefit program now met by the processing tax, says W. T. Anderson, editor of the Macon Telegraph.

Addressing a meeting of Bibb county cotton farmers yesterday, Anderson said a sales tax is the only method by which "every dollar wrung from the people in taxes can be turned into the treasury and applied as the law intends."

The 200 white and negro farmers attending the meeting by unanimous vote adopted resolutions supporting the administration's cotton program. The resolutions previously had been signed by about 150 farmers.

At Anderson's suggestion, there was added an amendment saying "the processing tax must be continued until a more equitable method of collecting benefit payments can be devised."

Anderson said the processing tax fell too heavily on the poorer classes.

"It is quite repulsive," he continued, "to contemplate a sales tax instead of a processing tax, but it seems to me that is the only fair way by which to make everyone who uses cotton in any form pay part of this benefit money."

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## OUR INFANT INDUSTRY

The old plaint of Georgia farmers that "there is no use raising foodstuffs for the market, because you can't sell them," is receiving some hard blows this year and, in the parlance of the prize ring, it is becoming very groggy.

It is not so long ago that there was considerable truth in that old plaint, but there was a good and sufficient reason. The average farmer raised cotton almost exclusively; those who raised fruits, vegetables and berries produced these products mainly for the consumption of their own families.

Our farmers did not know how to grade and pack high-grade products, but that condition is changing for the better. With enforced reduction in cotton growing the better farmers of the state have taken up the production of fruits, vegetables and berries with the object of making this industry a profitable side line, gradually increasing their efforts until it becomes a major project. They are rapidly learning that high-grade products, from which all culls have been eliminated by careful grading, and which are attractively packed so they will compare favorably with imported products, are welcomed by retail dealers of their communities, while housewives will flock to the curb and city markets to make purchases.

In plain words, quality goods will sell but inferior products will not. No better illustration of the demand for high-grade products could be given than to cite instances of two growers near Atlanta. R. F. Sams Jr., of Clarkston, is noted for his high-quality tomatoes, while D. A. Russell, of Avondale, is equally noted for his excellent berries. Neither of these growers can supply the demands of local hotels, clubs and grocers at premium prices, while farmers who market "just fair" products encounter reluctance on the part of buyers and must dispose of their goods at lower prices than are paid for imported products.

Mr. Sams is president of the recently formed Georgia Vegetable Growers' Association and Mr. Russell is one of the vice presidents. These men not only know how to grow high-grade products, but they also know the importance of strict grading, and, in all probability, they eliminate one-third of their goods as culls, knowing full well that the appearance of just a few inferior specimens in a shipment marks the entire lot as seconds.

It is interesting to note that the two-day meeting of the vegetable association, held in Savannah June 5 and 6, was attended by over 500 growers from all parts of the state, in addition to a large number of agricultural experts from the state's various institutions, marketing specialists and buyers for large retail and wholesale houses.

The association is promoting the organization of county units to work in harmony with the parent organization and already some 15 counties have active units that are enlisting progressive farmers for serious work in the infant industry. There are but few staple articles in the line of foodstuffs that can be grown elsewhere in the United States that cannot be grown in Georgia and, as evidenced in the case of Sams and Russell, much better. Nor are Sams and Russell alone in this distinction; there are a multitude of growers in various parts of the state who specialize on this or that product, producing articles of such high grade as to point the way to others and encourage them to excel.

One object of the vegetable growers' association is to assist in teaching farmers how to grow the best, grade properly, and pack correctly for shipment and marketing, and with markets being established at various points in the state, the future looks bright for the progressive farmer who desires to succeed.

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## What's the Matter With Georgia?

The Government is backing a removal of Minnesota farmers into Alaska, and enemies of the New Deal are predicting that in a little while the whole group of them will be tramping back to the states to get on dole.

It is a strange move, one that we Georgians cannot understand. Alaska is a big territory. It has 590,000 square miles of area, which makes it ten times the size of Georgia, so that it would reach from Maine to the southern end of Florida; but comparatively little of it is available for agriculture. In the list of products shipped from there, not a thing agricultural is mentioned, and much it buys from outside, is agricultural. It would seem, therefore, that the new citizens being sent up there may be taking big chances.

The climate and rainfall are as varied as in the different parts of the United States. If Minnesota became too arid, they are not likely to find anything so perfect up close to the arctic shores, where mountains tower nineteen thousand feet in the air, and where still exist glaciers that are the most extensive remnants of the ice-age, and where in places they will experience more than a hundred inches of rainfall, and where the temperature is counted mild in July at 50 degrees.

Compare this with Georgia, and it seems more than strange that none of those good people could have been blessed with a home here. Georgia could offer them:

Plenty of pure water on every farm site in the state.

More varieties of field and garden crops than any other state.

More crops on the same land in one year than any other state.

The most agreeable climate in the nation year in and year out.

No deaths from sunstroke.

More varieties of soil on a given area.

Three 100-mile empires within one political jurisdiction—mountain ranges in northwest corner, extending across state and down to Commerce. Piedmont section with Athens as its capital and stretching across the state at the base of the mountains. Plateau region, extending across from Macon to the Atlantic on one side, and within a short distance of the Gulf of Mexico on the southwest, known as south Georgia.

Georgia's future program is sure to include animal husbandry. T. A. Colquitt, operating the Hightower farm at Walden, reports that he has just finished a bunch of beef cattle, putting 131 pounds on each one of them in 40 days. In Texas Georgia corn-fed beef is advertised as the sweetest meat on the market.

Georgia has twenty million acres of land that can be made available for people like those who are trying to get away from the

## FARMERS RAP AAA AT MIDWAY RALLY

Advertiser

### Organize Protest Group With A. Lewis President; Two-Bale Men Dissatisfied

9-14-35

The Agricultural Adjustment Administration and its plan of administering the Bankhead Act and other crop control measures were denounced in strong terms recently by a group of Bullock County cotton producers who held what some of them called an "indignation" meeting at Midway. Secretary of Agriculture Wallace also came in for censure by the protesting farmers who assembled Thursday night at the Midway High School Building.

From this meeting emerged the American Cotton Growers' Association, organized, it was announced, primarily to protect the interests of the small cotton farmer of the South. A. Lewis, who was elected president of the association, was in Montgomery yesterday and announced that its goal was to enlist 20,000 cotton growers "standing shoulder to shoulder for a common cause by Jan. 1, next."

Similar mass meetings, Lewis said, were being planned in other counties. Unless the existing AAA program is altered so as to appease the protestants, he predicted a collapse of the crop control machinery and wide rebellion among cotton producers.

Complaints against the manipulation and administration of the Bankhead Act this year were said to have been the chief target of the Bullock County farmers. Mr. Lewis said cotton growers of his section were keenly disappointed at failure of the AAA to exempt the small farmer up to two bales, tax free. Unequal distribution of gin certificates was also charged up to the agricultural authorities in Washington.

"There were other complaints also that inspired the meeting with determination to act without delay upon what was thought to be the best plan to stop further taxation of the cotton grower," Mr. Lewis asserted.

According to Mr. Lewis, farmers who participated in the protest meeting favored continuance of cotton control by the Government, but he said they were bitterly opposed to paying any tax to have their cotton ginned. "Let the AAA reduce acreage as much as it desires, but it should not impose a heavy tax on cotton growers who join in the control program," he said.

Mr. Lewis added that it was the belief of the Midway meeting that "the desires and welfare of the farmers as a whole had been ignored by Mr. Wallace and that the AAA press agents had deceived the public by claiming Southern cotton producers were enthusiastically behind the Bankhead Act."

He further stated those attending the meeting were heartily in accord with the thought that a more practical and satisfactory method of crop control could be worked out for the coming year without heavy taxation.

Serving with President Lewis as officers of the American Cotton Growers' Association are Matthew Hitchcock, vice-presidnet; Lawrence Morton, secretary-treasurer; P. P. Jordan, H. L. King, W. B. Mitchell, Lee Hoffman, E. A. Robertson, L. L. Cole, Sid Pruett and James Adams, directors.

# Georgia Farmers Protest Cotton Tax to Talmadge

### Twenty-four Letter Writers Blast Six Cents Penalty Levy on Non-Exempt Lint and Other AAA Policies as Governor Receives Praise for Stand

By JAMES ETHERIDGE

Twenty-four farmers' letters which Governor Talmadge says influenced him to seek an injunction against collection of the government's six cents penalty tax on non-exempt lint cotton were given The Telegraph yesterday by the state's chief executive.

Complaining that their allotments under the Bankhead act are too small "even to make a living on," the letter writers' are unanimous in criticizing restrictions of the act and AAA policies which the governor has attacked.

"Hoping that you can do something and some day I may live to see you president," writes Reid Pittman, Sandersville, Route No. 2, and C. B. Wood, Roopville, Route No. 2, says "Hooray for Talmadge" among the sheaf which are replete with similar praise of the governor.

Governor Talmadge and a group of Putnam county farmers last week were granted a temporary injunction by Federal Judge Bascom S. Deaver here, but any other farmer wishing to set aside the penalty tax must himself file a separate intervention before the injunction applies to him.

Most of the farmers describe themselves as "small cotton farmers" and make frequent reference to "the big cotton men," the "big men," the "collar-and-tie men" and the "ones running the AAA and the Bankhead act getting all the benefits."

**Something "Got to Be Done"**

"Governor Talmadge, something has got to be done. I will get about two bales of cotton and some peanuts. If I could get tax exemption on my cotton, it would help some" says Reid Pittman.

"I am a poor little three-horse farmer with six in family and will make five bales of cotton. I don't see how I could live if I could have gotten all of it tax-free, but I can't sell but 1,075 pounds of lint cotton tax-free," says J. A. Sanders, Fort Valley, Route No. 2.

L. M. Potts, Sr., Moultrie, itemizes his expenses and receipts, showing he will be left with a deficit of $13. "But I see in the papers that this administration has put the farmers on their feet. Governor stay with the boys, we are scotching for you," he says.

**In Rags and Tears**

A. B. Young, Sr., Fort Valley, says "big cotton farmers are the only ones who are happy. The rest of us are in rags and tears."

J. E. Bolling of Alpharetta writes "to let you know that the people are standing with you in this fight you are making against this processing tax that has been put on them by nobody but the devil's crowd."

C. B. Word of Roopville: "I signed up and they gave me 3,870 lbs. lint. My payment on the place is 25,000 lbs. lint . . . I can't get enough out of the farm to pay my taxes . . . Hooray for Talmadge."

D. C. Short of Commerce, says "the man who had his land in cotton for the last five years held up his average, and is prospering today with the many thousand that have the collar-and-tie jobs . . . I have the deeds to this land, but I will not have them long if something is not done."

W. H. Morrison, Jesup, writes "after the tax (on 2,300 pounds) is paid, we will have only three or four cents per pound, are paying 60 cents for picking. How are we to live and pay taxes at this rate?"

W. L. Edwards, Ellaville, Route No. 3, with a five-horse farm and a 12-bale allotment, says "My dear governor, under the conditions we are ruined and doomed. In the name of Jehovah God, what do they mean? We have figured the thing on the principle of the slot machine. By the Eternals, we will not stand for it."

Mrs. Maggie Montgomery, Gibson, says "I didn't sign anything. Oswell worked the cotton and made six bales of cotton, and he got one bale of cotton tax free. I didn't get anything . . . I want you to see if you can get me more cotton to sell tax-free."

T. A. McLeod of Carrollton, Route No. 6, writes "it looks as if I will lose my little home this fall. My allotment is four bales on a two-horse farm. It cost me the four bales to make this crop . . . If the gin tax is lifted, I can make it."

M. G. Hallman of Preston said "There are others around here that received anywhere from two to six bales to the plow and some of us can scarcely get any."

**Midville Man Badly Treated**

D. W. Oglesby, Midville: "Dear governor, please give me some advice as to what to do. I owe my loan interest and can't sell the cotton unless I give the government half of my cotton. I don't think I have been treated right."

Henry L. Butterworth of Gainesville, Route No. 4, said he moved on "a place that had only been making two bales of cotton. So last fall, when I got my certificate, I only got 555 pounds of lint cotton. That was for me and my landlord both, as I rent third and fourth. So this year I did not hear from the government at all."

M. T. Bryant of Cochran, Route No. 3: "I am in distress over my cotton. I was allotted 14 acres to plant and I will make 10 bales of cotton and can't sell but 1,300 pounds tax-free—and it won't pay my rent."

G. M. Rountree of Soperton, Route No. 3, writes: "I want you to reply back whether or not that tax on cotton can be moved where a man has made over his allotment . . . if I have to pay that tax I can't clothe my family for the winter or send my children to school."

**Never a New Dealer**

W. C. Haralson, Social Circle: "Do you know of any way that my cotton can be ginned without paying the tax on what cotton I have made above my allotment which will be about 25 or 30 bales . . . I cannot get the 10-cents loan, as I have never co-operated in this New Deal."

C. H. Thompson, of Beuna Vista, encourages "I hope you could get it stopped. I have been talking to a number of people . . . and they don't seem to be satisfied—especially the one and two-horse farmers. Some of them can't even gin enough to pay the rent, let alone their debts."

F. N. Chance, Perkins: "Now that I have produced two bales of cotton to pay this (seed) loan with, I have only been allotted tickets to sell 500 pounds lint. I am not able to contest this allotment, so am appealing to you to assist me in this matter."

J. W. White, who signs as justice of peace, Pine Park, says "it looks to me like something has got to be done with the tax burdens that have been put on the different farm commodities . . . if this tax is not lifted, there is going to be many more on the government to be cared for."

**Alabaman Joins Forces**

A. E. Dozier, of Wetumpka, Ala., route No. 3, after describing efforts to have his allotment raised, says: "This is not the only case of this kind. It is real shocking to think that civilized people would practice such an injustice to their fellowman . . . Such an injustice will accompany soldiers to the battlefield and victims to the wall."

Luther M. Brown of Hartwell: "We are trying to run a two-horse farm. And when we signed up our contract for our allotment, we were to get 4,080 pounds . . . We found we were cut to 2,450 pounds. What on earth can a farmer do? If you protest, you are ridiculed by the bunch that's running the business."

Sidney S. Calhoun, Vidalia route No. 1, says: "Our cotton allotment is only four acres—950 pounds. Lint without tax. Tobacco, 2 1-2 acres, 1,800 pounds without tax. It does look like us little fellows could get a little more allotment of cotton anyway."

Mrs. Vinnie B. Chesser of Waycross route No. 5, writes: "I am asking your advice as to whether or not there is any chance for us to get out of paying this tax on our little bit of cotton. Guess we got around two bales and our allotment is only 300 pounds . . . My husband is dead. I have worked my children and myself in the heat until I would be ashamed of it, it hurts me to see our hard earnings taken away . . . Looks like the poor farmer's throat is being cut on every side, when they are the key to the whole world."

# Irate Farmers in Twiggs Demand Relief From AAA

## Removal of Ginning Tax, Right to Make Living Urged at Mass Meeting

Telegraph 9-20-33

JEFFERSONVILLE, Ga., Sept. 19—Three hundred or more farmers held a meeting here in the county court house this morning at 10 o'clock, to protest against the plan of allotting cotton production and the imposition of 6 cents tax at the gin on excess cotton produced.

Legislator L. L. Griffin was elected chairman of the morning's meeting, and was later made permanent chairman with instructions to make the organization permanent for the purpose of further protecting the interests of the cotton farmer.

Chairman Griffin stated that there had been great opposition to the holding of a meeting, federal government men circulating rumors that it was his meeting, that he had agitated for it. He stated that he had only acted in response to urgent request of many farmers who were present, who felt that they had been unjustly treated by the federal cotton officials, and wanted to register this protest in the way calculated to get most results.

Several farmers made talks, and whenever they criticized or denounced the federal administration they were roundly applauded. There was much evidence of great resentment of and opposition to the present status of affairs. One farmer talked himself into tears several times in trying to relate the hardships he was suffering and expressing his feelings over the matter. He stated that he had been farming for 54 years, had taken care of himself and family, had paid his taxes to his government and had done his part in supporting it—but that now that same government had borne down on him in such fashion that he couldn't make a living. He told of how the local allotting committee had found a way by which to class him as a new farmer in the face of his 54 years of hard work on his farm in that county, and that by doing this the committee was able to cut his cotton privilege to one bale for a two-horse farm, and force him to pay 6 cents per pound on what he ginned in excess of the allotment; and that this bale would not pay his taxes, threatening him with foreclosure; and that he had no money to buy the necessities he couldn't raise.

**Farmers Cautioned**

J. H. Balcom admonished the meeting to go slowly in its resolutions criticising the administration; that it had done its best for the farmers, and whatever was wrong about the program was a matter of the head and not the heart.

W. T. Anderson, Macon newspaper publisher, was introduced by Chairman Griffin with the explanation that he had invited Mr. Anderson to address the meeting on the farm program generally. Mr. Anderson said he commended the purposes of President Roosevelt in his efforts to help the farmers, but thought the plans by which it was being attempted were subject to serious criticism. He said the present program of the federal government in all its phases had been tried by different governments for the past five thousand years, and in every case it had proved a miserable failure, and that although he hoped many of the things now being attempted would succeed, he could see no evidence that the United States government is any smarter or in any better position to make it a success than had the other governments. He pointed out the necessity for doing something for the farmer, and commended the efforts in that direction. However, he said, no man could have his cake and eat it, too; that the Hoover administration began buying cotton at 16 cents per pound without any crop control, and the price sank under the buying plan to five cents per pound, losing the government 300 million dollars.

Mr. Anderson said the farmer had to choose between absolute freedom under old conditions of five-cent cotton, or government aid with the new shoe pinching and rubbing corns on the feet as in the present case. He agreed that there was a great injustice done under the present program because the people administering it were like most political appointees—they had never been able to make a living for themselves and were up in Washington telling men who had been able to do it what they ought to do about their business, and making them do it. He said this was only a sample of what might be expected as government got more and more into business.

Mr. Anderson stated that the grievance of the present audience might be met by allotting to small farmers two or maybe three bales, and reducing the crop by taking any additional cotton off the big farmer who grows hundreds of bales.

**Foreign Markets**

He spoke of the loss of foreign markets for three million bales of American cotton, and that this loss had been almost exactly provided by foreign growers. He said the processing tax ought to be so hedged as to prohibit and prevent any one adding a profit to it, and that every cent of this tax ought to go into the treasury for farm purposes. He cited instances of where the 4.2 cents processing tax had been added to by middlemen until it amounted to 60 cents per pound, the consumer paying the 60 cents and the farmer getting 4.2 cents of it. American cotton ought to be sold abroad for whatever it will bring, the difference between the foreign price and what is paid the American farmer as a fair price to be made up out of this processing tax. This three million bales lost to our farmers means idleness and hardship on every cotton farmer, but while this country is in the experiment it ought to follow through until absolutely convinced that no improvement can be made over old conditions.

Mr. Anderson commended the farmers for holding a protest meeting. He said the president was not narrow-minded enough to object to criticism, that he wanted to know when he was wrong and when he had overlooked some fellow who was suffering under anything which had been put into operation. "Meet and protest and holler when you are stepped on, and attention will be given to what you say, if you make it loud enough. Call your congressmen and senators here and show them how you are hurt and look to them for handling your case. The day has not yet arrived when you have to suffer in silence lest your daily crumb be denied you by somebody you have elevated to office and thinks he is too mighty and smart to commit error."

The following resolutions were passed by the meeting, having been drawn by a committee appointed after the meeting was called to order. They were adopted with two dissenting voices, statement being made that they were members of the government organization and might be misunderstood if they voted.

Resolved, That it is the sense and purpose of this meeting to champion the cause of no politician or candidate for office, but simply to further the interest of the farmer; pleading earnestly and without apology the farmer's betterment financially and morally.

Resolved that we farmers of Twiggs County, Ga., now assembled in mass meeting, do earnestly and vigorously protest against the inequalities and discrimination and downright injustice forced upon us by the overlords of the country.

Resolved, That the allotments given to cotton growers in innumerable instances are not only unjust but outrageously cruel, robbing the tenant, the share-cropper and the small farmer of his heaven-born rights.

Resolved, That if this wicked and most inhumane oppression continue much longer, we farmers will not only be brought to suffering and want, but will lose our homes and face starvation.

Resolved, That we are breathing the very atmosphere of slavery and listening to the crack of the master's whip, realizing in our souls that Sherman's march to the sea was hardly more cruel.

**Despicable Ruling**

Resolved, That we shall not tamely submit to this outrageous, this despicable ruling of a most autocratic, unsympathetic American, nor shall we give up the struggle until the sweat-crowned sons of the soil come into their own.

Resolved, finally, that this iniquitous ginning tax of 6 cents on farmers' cotton shall be lifted speedily, so that southern men and women may enjoy their liberty and have the right to live according to the constitution of the United States and according to God.

Resolved, That this meeting hereby advises all farmers who are compelled to pay the ginning tax shall first sign up with the petitioners before Judge Deaver in Macon, by paying 50 cents for attorneys' fees as arranged by Chairman Griffin; that this is the only way by which a cotton grower has a chance to get back his 6 cents ginning tax in the event the courts decide in his favor. We believe the excess cotton should be held in the seed if possible, otherwise only pay the 6 cents tax into the court as Judge Deaver provided.

This was signed by the committee on resolutions, composed of J. C. Solomon, I. Fitzpatrick, S. L. Boseman, John Day, J. W. Bryant, R. M. King, G. F. Cannon.

After the meeting adjourned various groups gathered on the court house square, discussing various phases of the meeting. The applause for everything against the Washington administration had been so pronounced in the meeting that the chairman of the meeting, L. L. Griffin, was asked what he thought of the relative popularity of Roosevelt and Talmadge. He replied that he had been in Twiggs county politics for 20 years or more, and had been fairly accurate in guessing the public attitude in various races. He said that if Roosevelt and Talmadge were in any race against one another at this time, and there were 1,000 votes cast, Talmadge would get 800 of them.

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# SUPREMACY IS HELD BY SOUTH'S COTTON

Montgomery Advertiser

## Brazilian 'Threat' Discounted In Light Of Past Efforts To Gain Control

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NEW ORLEANS, July 4. — (AP) — China, Russia, India, the English colonies and now Brazil have all taken their turn at being threats to American cotton supremacy and through it all the southern States have rolled merrily on as the greatest cotton-producing area in the world.

The many reports currently issuing from below the equator on the progress being made in cotton planting in Brazil the challenge to United States cotton leadership, are reminiscent in the cotton trade of attempts made by other countries to wrest the No. 1 position from America.

Wide alarm was expressed at one time on the Chinese "threat" to southern leadership. The tremendous tillable acreage, unlimited manpower, a good staple, and other natural factors possessed by China were advanced as reasons why they would soon usurp top position in the cotton trade. But time proved that China needed her land for food more than for cotton and today its position is relatively unchanged.

Practically the same situation existed in India. The British government spent millions of dollars in attempting to develop Indian cotton lands, but food was more important there and the Indian production of cotton has changed but little in the past two decades.

England formed a cotton growing association among its other colonies many years ago and for a time much was heard of what would happen to the southern cotton farmer and merchant when Egypt, with its long staple, began producing in volume.

Then came Russia, with its five-year plan and its ambitious program for cotton growing. About 10 years ago the Soviet indicated that they would be growing all the cotton they needed in five years. But this year Russia has taken 75,000 bales of American cotton, and a representative of the Soviet indicated they would take 1,000,000 bales if credit could be arranged.

Early this season Brazil was expected to produce a crop of approximately 1,500,000 bales. Latest reports indicate that an exportable surplus of around 350,000 bales will be all that the South American republic will add to the world export trade.

While there has been a fairly large increase in foreign growths in the last two years, the bureau of agricultural economics in a recent survey of the world cotton situation pointed out that any sizeable advance in the price of raw cotton always brought an increased production in the world. The bureau presented tables to show that in almost every case when the price of cotton dropped, the foreign growths made a similar decline.

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Mississippi.

COLUMBUS, O.
DISPATCH

FEB 23 1935

## Menace to Melody

DOWN in the Delta country of Mississippi and other regions where cotton growing is the principal occupation of the landowners, there are fears that the new mechanical cotton picking machine spells death for Negro melodies. The rythmic chorus of the ~~southern~~ Negro as he picks the cotton has been a feature of the area for many years.

On the other hand, many of the small growers say that there is no machine which "can work like human hands." It seems that there is a knack to picking cotton. This is true, as any amateur who has ever tried to lift the boll from the half opened pod with one pluck can testify. But for the Negro plantation hand that deft gesture is as natural to him as is his instinct for chicken.

It is difficult to believe that any machine can still the voice of the southern Negro, whether he is at work or play. If eventually machinery is used to pick the cotton, the melodies may not float above the plantation fields but they will come from the cabins or the levee or wherever the black man of the south may be lounging or working. Song is part of him, and in his southern atmosphere he has always sung as his fancy dictated, and about anything that might come to mind. There is no need to fear that he will ever be different Certainly no one wants him to be.

# Letters to the Editor

### THE TENANT PAYS

The The Commercial Appeal:

Governor Conner says there is a surplus in the Mississippi state treasury, and recommends that it be "returned to the taxpayers" by reducing or abolishing the ad valorem tax on property—that part of which goes to the state.

The surplus in the treasury is due to the sales tax. About three-fourths of the people of this state own no taxable property; but farm tenants and laborers all help pay the sales tax. The governor's plan seems to he Share-the-Wealth, or Soak-the-Rich scheme running in reverse. He wants to soak the poor, and return the benefits to the property owners.

Those who advocated a sales tax frequently referred to tenants—especially share croppers—as "a class that never pays any taxes." The landlord got the tax receipt, but it was usually the tenant that toiled to produce the cotton that brought the money to pay the landowner's tax. I am not opposed to the sales tax; but as a tenant of many years, I resent being scornfully referred to as belonging to a class that pays no taxes. My labor produced the cotton; the landlord took his half and paid the tax on his farm. The same is true of more than two-thirds of all farm taxes paid in this state for 50 years. Owners have always required and demanded that tenants grow cotton, because it took cotton to bring the money to pay his taxes. Is it fair and just to speak of tenants as "a class that nexer paid any tax," when their labor was producing nearly three-fourths of the entire money crop?

W. T. BAZZEL.

New Site, Misss.

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North Carolina

Raleigh, N. C., News & Observer
January 14, 1935

# CONTEST IS HELP TO NEGRO FARMER

## Corn Production on Better Plane; Sedalia Youth Makes Acreage Record

Negro vocational agricultural teachers throughout the State have been very active in improving the farming situation among their all-day and evening class students through the "3 to 1" corn program which was started in 1930 as a part of the great "live-at-home" program. This contest is sponsored by the State Department of Vocational Education and the Chilean Nitrate Educational Bureau.

The big purpose of the contest was to get the participants to produce three bushels of corn for each one made per acre for the past two years. This increased production was to take care of the needs in the home, for feeding the hogs and other animals. The remote objective has been to get the farmers to make more corn on less acreage thus releasing acres which are not well adapted to corn production. The acres released have been planted to league crops, which not only supply additional feed for the livestock, but has played an important point in building up the soil, thus increasing production at a low cost.

The stimulating influence the contest has had upon corn growers is only partly revealed through the following facts: There has been an increase in contestants this year over the first year of 641 persons and increase in production of 26,661.25 bushels. The cost of production per bushel for the winner in 1930 was 23 cents per bushel. This year the winner produced corn at 19 cents per bushel. The first year of the contest only four contestants produced as much as 70 bushels of corn pe racre. This year 12 individuals made 70 or more bushels per acre.

For four years those interested in the contest have been trying to produce 100 or more bushels per acre The honor of being the first Negro boy to make that record in the State goes to David Well of Palmer Memorial Institute, Sedalia. He made 101 bushels on an acre.

Well's story of corn production is that the land was cleaned from honeysuckles in 1930, planted in wheat and lespedeza. The latter crop was allowed to stay on the soil two years before it was turned under. The seed bed was thoroughly prepared and Jarvis Golden Prolific certified seed corn which tested 99 per cent was planted June 14. Rows were 3 1-2 feet a part and the corn planted 15 inches in the drill. Two hundred pounds of fertilizer 4-12-4 was used, and on July 14 and additional 100 pounds of nitrate of soda was used as side dressing. The crop was cultivated three times and harvested the second week in November.

GREENSBORO, N. C.
RECORD

MAR 27 1935

### Mules Furnished.

There was much confusion, to say nothing of mumbling, grumbling and bitter disappointment, among North Carolina negroes in Reconstruction days, some 70 years ago, when the Carpetbaggers, vultures who flew south to prey on conquered states and then in control at the state capital, failed to make good the promise of "Forty acres and a mule" for the head of every ex-slave family.

Now, it seems, better luck is in store for North Carolinians—both white and black—who would possess a mule and land to till. A Raleigh dispatch quotes Mrs. Thomas O'Berry, state relief administrator, as announcing that 500 mules are being distributed among North Carolina families that are participating in the rural rehabilitation program of the emergency relief administration.

Presumably the persons favored with a government mule will not lack land to cultivate, for within the bounds of the Old North State there are hundreds and hundreds of acres that are suitable for cultivation, now washing away or growing up in sedge, old field pines or blackberry bushes. Plenty of good land is available for those who would cultivate it.

During January and February 3,000 mules were distributed in the state as a part of the rural relief program, and an additional purchase of 500 mules will be made this month for delivery later in the season among rural rehabilitation families.

The United States government in this instance is going a long, long way in its general and far-reaching effort to get people off the dole—the hand-out system—and give them the opportunity to get on the land to plow and dig a living out of it.

The Carpetbaggers with their absurd and vicious promises of years ago were merely dealing out a lot of baloney to thousands of ignorant darkies who on being given freedom were wondering what to do with it, and what next? In the present instance the Washington administration in handing out mules is making good on a promise to help the people to help themselves to make a living. It must at least be conceded that the government's motive is both praiseworthy and honest. But how it is all going to turn out is a riddle we would not undertake to answer right now.

### FARM TENANTRY IN TARHEELIA

The Raleigh News and Observer, owned by our ambassador to Mexico, Mr. Josephus Daniels, but now edited by his boys, points out that in North Carolina one out of every two farmers owns no land and grows his crop from land that belongs to another. Further the number of tenant farmers has actually increased in proportion to those who till their own soil during the years in which people were talking about a richer and more progressive North Carolina, to use a phrase in an editorial appearing in The Asheville Citizen.

Federal census figures from 1880 on reveal the steady growth of tenancy in North Carolina. They run as follows in percentages:

| Year: | Tenants | Home Owners |
|---|---|---|
| 1880 | 33 | 67 |
| 1890 | 34 | 66 |
| 1900 | 41 | 59 |
| 1910 | 42 | 58 |
| 1920 | 43 | 57 |
| 1930 | 49 | 51 |

"These figures," comments The Asheville Citizen, "show the startling fact that when there was most talk of progress in this State farm tenantry was increasing most rapidly."

In 1929 the University News Letter declared that "North Carolina has been moving into farm tenancy faster than any other State except Texas since 1910. During the 15-year period from 1910 to 1925 the net increase in farms operated by tenants was 20,967 for North Carolina. Texas, a frontier State, much given to cotton farming, and five times as large as North Carolina, is the only State whose numerical increase of farm tenants surpassed North Carolina."

Continuing its thoughtful review and comment on this arresting information The Citizen says:

> It is probable that the situation has grown worse rather than better during the last five years of depression. Hence the State presents a picture of more than half of its farmers working the land "in a capacity differing in no important degree or aspect from peasantry unless it be that in most of the old countries the peasant is more secure and lives better on another man's land." Further, Senator Bankhead of Alabama points out that this is "not a Negro problem," since Negro tenancy is decreasing while white tenancy is on the increase.
>
> This problem of farm tenancy is one of the gravest before North Carolina—and the whole South today. Frequently it has been asserted that tenancy was a step up from servitude to home ownership and that thus it would eventually disappear. But the facts do not support this belief. As a class tenants are poorer, less ambitious and less efficient than farmers who own and work their own land. Hence the spread of tenancy is a sad comment on the social changes that have gone on in our rural districts.
>
> No country and no section can remain vigorous without a class of thrifty, progressive small farmers. Too much industrialization and too much of great landed estates both have the effect of detracting from a healthy democratic way of life. So the problem of raising tenancy is one of the most serious before us today.

Whatever is true of rural life in North Carolina is substantially true of rural life in Alabama. This State is afflicted by a farflung tenant system. It is wasteful, useless, destructive.

Every man who owns a small piece of land is a better citizen than he would be if he farmed 50 acres owned by someone else. Moreover, he is a better farmer

Whatever else the New Deal may do or fail to do, let it not fail to make it possible for hordes of Southern farmers to buy a little of the land that they now half cultivate. Senator Bankhead, of Alabama, is on the right track in this regard. Give him a helping hand.

FAYETTEVILLE, N. C.
OBSERVER

JUL 12 1935

## FARM TENANCY MENACE.

Unless there has been some drastic change since 1930 the time has now arrived in North Carolina when half of the farmers do not own the land they till.

Federal census figures show a steady increase in farm tenancy in North Carolina dating from 1880 when only 33 per cent of the farmers were tenants. In 1890 34 per cent were tenants. In 1900 41 per cent were tenants. In 1910 the tenancy percentage was 42. In 1920 43 per cent were tenants and in 1930 49 out of every 100 farmers lived on somebody else's land.

Nor is it a problem of negro tenants for negro tenancy is decreasing and white tenancy increases.

The trend is dangerous. A country of tenants is an unstable country. Absentee landlordism by any name is productive of injustice and incentive to class prejudice, whereas there is no more stabilizing factor in any government than the ownership of the land by the people who live on it.

The economic result also is highly unsatisfactory. National prosperity depends on a well-divided wealth. But when a man who owns his own land mortgage free can barely make a living farming it stands to reason that the man who must pay over half of what he makes to somebody else is not going to buy many automobiles or radios or have electric lights put in his home even if the rural electrification proposition ever does become a fact.

How to stop farm tenancy and how to encourage farmers to own their own land is a problem worth the attention of the powers that be because it involves ends that reach far into the national welfare.

One way would be to make it a capital felony for anybody to lend any farmer a dime. Five or ten years under a dictator capable of enforcing such a ruling would find the farmers better off than they had ever been before although the first one or two years would be hard sledding.

Another approach would be to abolish all taxes on land. That is possible without dictatorship and we are making progress in that direction.

Still another step that the farmers themselves must take if they ever achieve for themselves the place they deserve in the world, is closer co-operation.

When the farmers begin to apply to their affairs the same business methods used by the persons to whom they sell their produce and from whom they buy their supplies, when the farmers stop trying to chisel on each other, then farm tenancy will stop and the number of farmers who own their own property will increase.

Charlotte, N. C. Observer
August 19, 1935

### USES SHARE CROPPERS.

An interesting point about the Secrest farm is that it is worked entirely by negro share-croppers. The landlord furnishes all the stock and machinery, and on corn and cotton, half the fertilizer. The tenants furnish the other half of the fertilizer and get half of these crops. Mr. Secret furnishes everything for the small grain and lespedeza pays the tenants to do the work, and get the whole crop.

One of the tenants said that he liked this system of farming the best of any he had ever tried, because he is now making twice as much cotton on this farm with 300 pounds of fertilizer to the acre than he could make with 600 pounds six years ago.

At George Hart's dairy farm the first thing shown the party was 17 acres of Eureka ensilage corn 10 feet high, with Biloxi soybeans planted between the hills. This growth was made since June 3 and follows a hay crop of oats, barley, wheat and vetch. The field has been double-cropped in this manner for three years, but heavy manuring and liberal fertilization are making it more productive each year.

Mr. Hart expects 12 acres of this field to fill his 170-ton trench silo. This silo was used last year for the first time, and gave perfect satisfaction.

The pasture on the Hart farm is a perfect sod of dallis, carpet and other grasses. Regular mowing keeps it entirely free of weeds.

A 12-acre field of Mexican cotton, planted after five years of corn in soybeans was estimated by Mr. Broom at one and one-quarter bales per acre. The cotton was fertilized with 500 pounds of 4-10-6 per acre as was the ensilage corn. The field is already sown to vetch.

Agriculture-1935
& Condition of

South Carolina.

Columbia, S. C. State
June 19, 1935

# Beaufort Negro Teacher Works Wonders With Race

Special to The State.

Beaufort, June 18.—Walter Taylor, Negro agriculture instructor for the Beaufort county ERA, working under the supervision of the county farm agent, T. H. Seabrook, has made something of a reputation for himself in his territory. His weekly meetings at various points in his district have attracted considerable interest and are largely attended by both white and Negro people.

Although Walter is supposed to work directly with the relief clients, who number about 100, he has actually reached and influenced about 300 Negro farmers in his particular territory through his meetings and classes of instruction. Walter's main interest is to persuade these farmers of small acreages to plant their entire land to produce foodstuffs for their own use and to otherwise improve their living conditions. Since 1933 he has worked night and day with these people and as a result he has added about 200 acres to cultivation from October of 1934 to June of 1935 over that of the previous year. Crops planted on these lands include corn, peas, sweet and Irish potatoes, rice, sugar cane, sorphum and garden produce.

This Negro teacher has conducted nine agricultural classes, these being at Stewart Point, Seabrook, Grays Hill, Jones Field, Chaplin, Habersham, Port Royal, Laurel Bay and Pine Grove. In addition to his classes he holds a meeting once each week. Mr. Seabrook and the ERA garden supervisor, Miss Lillian Rice, are always present at these meetings to offer suggestions for improved farming conditions.

In addition to his farm instruction Walter has worked for improved water conditions on these Negroes' farms. Through his help 25 wells have been put in good condition, thus eliminating the danger of typhoid and other diseases. He has also helped to build 59 feeding racks for these farmers, who had heretofore fed their animals on the ground.

Agriculture - 1935
Condition of

Study made under auspices of Julius Rosenwald Fund

Opelika, Ala. News
March 27, 1935

## THE TRAGEDY IN AGRICULTURE

The exhaustive report on the agricultural, economic and social conditions in the South, submitted by the the committee delegated by the Rosenwald Foundation to study the subject should have the effect of erasing any impression that recovery measures are doing the job upon the farms of the South.

The report is poignant with the elements of poverty on the cotton farms, especially among 1,790,883 share-croppers, of whom 1,091,944 are said to be white. Over one-third of the white tenants are reported to be in a poverty-striken condition, with the same situation obtaining among the negroes.

As a palative, the relief program of the government is serving many, it is shown, one family out of every four having been assisted last year at a cost of $212,561,552 to the federal government. The tragic element lies in the fact that such an enormous number of persons have to be assisted, though they are in daily contact with the soil; a soil capable of producing practically all that is needful to provide comforts for the farmer and his family.

As a remedy, the committee makes the startling suggestion that "America might well follow the example of Ireland and Denmark and embark upon a program of government aid to peasant proprietorship." Answering the objection that "Southern share-croppers do not want to emulate the European peasantry," the committee observes, "Any self-respecting peasant proprietor in France would view with loathing the conditions of a Mississippi cotton cropper."

Such a development as herein suggested would mark a startling climax to the chain of events upon the farm: crop curtailment, futile price-pegging, loss of foreign markets, increasing poverty and, finally, a state of peasantry!

The conclusions drawn by this committee following its exhaustive study, may be defective, but the facts alone are sufficient to arouse the whole nation to the truth that the farm problem has not been solved and that it is high time for the situation to be faced and workable remedies applied.

The issue is national, rather than sectional, for it is utterly impossible for the nation to thrive industrially if the Southern farmer is to endure poverty. Hungry, ill-clad persons cannot keep factories busy and provide employment in industry.

The South served the nation for years in producing a crop for export which enabled this country to carry a gratifying balance in the trade column, and it is vitally interested in a situation under which these exports are falling off sharply, with dire results to industry as well as to agriculture.

The issue is here; it must be met, and the fact may as well be recognized that present methods are inadequate if not futile.

Charlotte, N. C. News
March 21, 1935

## *Not What But How.*

Again the South meets a crisis. This time it is ushered in by the committee on minority groups in the economic recovery. These Southern crises come so regularly that it is difficult to keep them all in mind.

In our present dilemma, outlined by the Rosenwald Fund chief executive, an Atlanta inter-racial student and a Fisk university professor, it is suggested that we —

> . . . may choose continued regimentation of agricultural production, with subsidies for released lands and relief for displaced tenants and agricultural laborers, or . . . we may decide this is too great a price to pay for concentrated land ownership. In such a case America might well follow the example of Ireland and Denmark and embark upon a program of government aid to peasant proprietorship.

And there, after a manner, you are. Always, it comes back to Old King Cotton's era of misrule — our excessive devotion to him, his out-moded credit system, his land tenure system, his reduction of his lower classes to "a state of peonage that approaches slavery."

Every dilettante economist arrives at that conclusion almost as soon as he begins to wonder how to reform the South. It doesn't take a $50,000 investigation to bring it out. What we need is somebody who will put punch in the movement for operator-owned cottonless farms.

**INDIANAPOLIS, IND.**
**NEWS**

MAR 25 1935

### *SHARE CROPPERS*

A sordid and astonishing condition is revealed in the report of a survey of southern agricultural affairs made under the direction of Edwin R. Embree, president of the Julius Rosenwald fund; Dr. Will W. Alexander, director of the commission on inter-racial co-operation, and Professor Charles S. Johnson, Negro head of the department of social research at Fisk University. The Rosenwald fund appropriated $50,000 to finance the survey, which continued for more than a year. The report declares that had it not been for the millions in federal money, poured into that section, many of both races would have died of starvation.

Contrary to general belief, the report shows more white than Negro tenant farmers in the cotton states. Referring to them as peasants, yet saying that their living standards are lower than those of any peasant classes in Europe, the investigators show that in thirteen states where cotton is the chief crop, there are 1,091,944 white and 698,839 Negro tenant farmers. Between 1920 and 1930 more than 200,000 whites became tenants by reason of the loss of their land through foreclosures and other legal proceedings. Meanwhile, the Negro tenants decreased by 2,000 as their numbers went north in search of work or moved to southern cities. "Half of these tenants are share croppers," the report states, "owning neither land nor capital, live stock nor tools, and wholly dependent for these on their landlords." Further it says:

The furnishing of tenants with seed and tools and food and clothing at the traditional margin of from 20 to 30 per cent. above cash prices has taken on a new aspect since it has become possible for land owners to secure their needed funds from the Farm Credit Administration at rates varying from 4½ to 6½ per cent. As a result, the government finds itself an involuntary, if not unsuspecting, partner in usury. It has furnished the credit for a thoroughly reprehensible system of extortion.

Southern states do little toward solving their problems. Last year, 99.9 per cent. of the relief money used in Florida came from the federal government, in Mississippi 98.1 per cent. and in Louisiana 97.9 per cent. Senator Huey Long urges a share-the-wealth program for the nation without having shown in his own state that he can help citizens long in need of the bare necessities of life.

**ROME, GA.**
**NEWS TRIBUNE**

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The conclusions drawn by this committee

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## Ferment in the South

TO those who know the South, the problems of southern rural labor on the front pages today are very old difficulties, brought to a head by the depression and by the effects of AAA policies. For decades Negro and "poor white" tenant farmers have existed at a meager subsistence level, seldom free from debt to the landlord who "furnishes" supplies. Communities offer the southern farm-worker little or nothing in the way of educational, medical or social services. Malaria, hookworm and pellagra take heavy toll. Ignorance, disease, poverty, race prejudice have kept labor "docile" and have helped defeat the few sporadic attempts at its organization. The drive to reduce cotton acreage has resulted to date in an eight-to-one division of government-benefit payments in favor of the landlords, and at the same time has cut adrift thousands of tenants and sharecroppers. The secretary of agriculture recently wrote, "I am fully aware that acreage adjustment produces its unemployment problem just as the shutting down of factories in the cities."

Out of the increasing misery has come an amazing breakdown of racial barriers and the growth of the first effective organization among rural labor groups. The Southern Tenant Farmers Union, which has been particularly active in eastern Arkansas, is opposed by landowners, often with violence. Behind the headlines, complex social and economic forces are in ferment. They will be discussed in an early issue of Survey Graphic by an informed Southerner, who will draw on his own first-hand knowledge and on the report of a year's study by the Julius Rosenwald Fund, just completed under the direction of Edwin R. Embree, president of the Fund; Will W. Alexander, Commission on Inter-racial Cooperation; and Charles S. Johnson, Fisk University.

Spartanburg S. C. Journal

### Both Horns of a Dilemna

The South's problem, summarizes a report of the Committee on Minority Groups in Economic Recovery submitted to President Roosevelt and the Department of Agriculture, is not a negro problem, but one of tenant farmers and sharecroppers "in a state of peonage that approaches slavery." Personnel of this committee consists of: Edwin E. Embree, president of the Julius Rosenwald Fund; Dr. W. W. Alexander of Atlanta, director of the commission on the Interracial Cooperation, and Prof. Charles B. Johnson of Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn. This committee advocates a radical revision of the southern economy and pictures the South's dilemma in this way: "With declining exports and increasing foreign cotton production, the South stands face to face with a choice. It may choose continued regimentation of agricultural production, with subsidies for released lands and relief for displaced tenants and agricultural laborers, or it may decide that this is too great a price to pay for concentrated land ownership. In such a case America might well follow the example of Ireland and Denmark and embark on a program of government aid to peasant proprietorship."

In comment on these findings, which are of serious interest and concern in dealing with a tragic unsolved problem of southern agriculture, the Cotton Trade Journal infers that the idea conveyed is that the South's problem is solely a question of how it is to produce cotton. That goes only half way, however, for an equally important and difficult problem is "how to sell cotton."

**SPARTANBURG, S. C.**
**JOURNAL**

MAY 2 1935

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Jackson, Tenn. Sun
March 22, 1935

# SOUTH'S ECONOMIC STRUCTURE WOULD UNDERGO CHANGE

## Under Recommendations of Group Making Special Study of Problems

NEW YORK, March 22—(AP)—Following a year's study of conditions in the South, the committee on minority groups in the economic recovery recommends drastic readjustments of the South's "excessive devotion to cotton, its land tenure system, its outmoded credit system and the peculiar economic status assigned the lowest level negro farmers."

The report filled 250 pages and was made public yesterday. The study was financed by $50,000 from the Julius Rosenwald foundation and has been brought to the attention of President Roosevelt.

Committeemen making the study were Edwin R. Embree of Chicago, president of the Rosenwald fund; Dr. Will W. Alexander of Atlanta, director of the commission on interracial cooperation and Prof. Charles S. Johnson, head of the department of social research of Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn.

The committee found the South "with declining exports and increasing foreign cotton production," stands face to face with a choice.

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The report in urging transition from the South's devotion to cotton, said a system of general or all-around farming could be introduced speedily and easily at this time, releasing a farm population of 16,000,000 from "as meager a diet of fatback, corn pone and molasses under as extortionate a credit system as can be found in the world's agriculture."

Agriculture - 1935
Condition of

Study made under auspices of Julius Rosenwald Fund.

Rome, Ga. News-Tribune
March 25, 1935

## THE TRAGEDY IN AGRICULTURE

THE exhaustive report on the agricultural, economic and social conditions in the South, submitted by the committee delegated by the Rosenwald Foundation to study the subject, should have the effect of erasing any impression that recovery measures are doing the job upon the farms of the South.

The report is poignant with the elements of poverty on the cotton farms, especially among 1,790,883 share-croppers, of whom 1,091,944 are said to be white. Over one-third of the white tenants are reported to be in a poverty-stricken condition, with the same situation obtaining among the negroes.

As a pallative, the relief program of the government is serving many, it is shown, one family out of every four having been assisted last year at a cost of $212,561,552 to the federal government. The tragic element lies in the fact that such an enormous number of persons have to be assisted, though they are in daily contact with the soil; a soil capable of producing practically all that is needful to provide comforts for the farmer and his family.

As a remedy, the committee makes the startling suggestion that "America might well follow the example of Ireland and Denmark and embark upon a program of government aid to peasant proprietorship," Answering the objection that "Southern share-croppers do not want to emulate the European peasantry," the committee observes "Any self-respecting peasant proprietor in France would view with loathing the conditions of a Mississippi cotton cropper."

Such a development as herein suggested would mark a startling climax to the chain of events upon the farm: Crop curtailment, futile price-pegging, loss of foreign markets, increasing poverty and, finally, a state of peasantry!

The conclusions drawn by this committee following its exhaustive study, may be defective, but the facts alone are sufficient to arouse the whole nation to the truth that the farm problem has not been solved and that it is high time for the situation to be faced and workable remedies applied.

The issue is national, rather than sectional, for it is utterly impossible for the nation to thrive industrially if the Southern farmer is to endure poverty. Hungry, ill-clad persons cannot keep factories busy and provide employment in industry.

The South served the nation for years in producing a crop for export which enabled this country to carry a gratifying balance in the trade column, and it is vitally interested in a situation under which these exports are falling off sharply, with dire results to industry as well as to agriculture.

The issue is here; it must be met, and the fact may as well be recognized that present methods are inadequate if not futile.

New Orleans, La., Item
March 26, 1935

## A Study Of The South

A COMMITTEE financed by the Rosenwald Foundation completes a year's study of conditions in the South and presents recommendations wh ch will be called to President Roosevelt's attention. The committee deplores the South's "excessive devotion to cotton, its land-tenure system, its outmoded credit system and the peculiar status assigned the lowest level of Negro farmers." It recommends diversified farming, and says the South must choose:

"It may choose continued regimentation of agricultural production with subsidies for released lands and relief for displaced tenants and agricultural laborerers. . . . Or it may decide this is too great a price to pay for concentrated land ownership. In such a case America might well follow the example of Ireland and Denmark and embark on a program of government aid to peasant proprietorship."

The South is not a man, nor a corporation nor a group of men and corporations so tightly organized as to be able to act as a unit. When economists and sociologists say that the South may do this or that, they must leave out of account, in order to present any recommendations at all, the stubborn fact that the South won't act as a unit on an issue. To that extent general recommendations are idle.

BUT such surveys aren't useless. Students with liberal schemes for remaking the South don't exert much influence upon planters, sharecroppers, cotton-brokers, and industrialists who compose the South's economic system as it is, the success or failure of whose own business ventures would figure in the evolution of any new system to come. Investigators should by this time, however, have made some impression on the public mind in the South.

Almost without exception they have denounced the sharecropping system and "excessive devotion" to cotton. This unanimity may eventually convince the South that these "institutions" are subject to improvement. The evolution of substitutes will probably be slow and painful, not a sudden change to be effected by fiat. The investigators do their part in educating us toward change.

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Cumming, Ga., News
March 28, 1935

## Federal Aid Sought To Raise Status Of The Tenant Farmer

An urgent request for government aid in raising the status of the tenant farmer to that of a self-supporting landowner was sounded in a report by a committee of educators after an exhaustive study of the South's agricultural situation.

The committees reported that 71 per cent of the South's cotton farms and 58 per cent of all its farms are cultivated by tenants, with acreage curtailments driving thousands of others off the soil entirely and on to the relief rolls.

For the families who continue to cultivate the soil on shares for a landlord, the report sees a hopeless, debt-burdened future, "with a meager diet of fat-back, corn pone and molasses as can be found in the world's agriculture."

"The plantation," it points out, "is not interested in feeding its tenants with the vegetables, milk ,meats and fruits of a beneficent soil and clime; it wants only its cash crop of cotton."

The report was made public by the "Committee on Minority Groups in the Economic Recovery." Dr. E. R. Embree, Chicago, president of the Julian Rosenwald fund; Dr. W. W. Alexander, Atlanta, director of the commission on Interracial cooperation, and Dr. Charles S. Johnson, of Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee directed the survey.

Moultrie, Ga., Observer
March 28, 1935

## IN THE COTTON BELT

With seventy-one per cent of its cotton farmers landless and fifty-eight per cent of its total farm population in the same condition, with tenancy steadily increasing, with declining exports of cotton and increasing cotton production abroad, the South confronts today a major economic crisis, which demands prompt and vigorous action, according to an arresting report made public here today by the Committee on Minority Groups in the Economic ecovery, giving the results of an exhaustive study of the Souths agricultural situation.

This study, made under the auspices of a committee composed of Dr. E. R. Embree, of Chicago, President of the Julius Rosenwald Fund; Dr. W. W. Alexander, of Atlanta, Director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation; and Dr. Charles S. Johnson, of Fisk University, Nashville, was intended primarily to explore the status of negro agricultural workers. It revealed the fact, however, that the farm tenant population of the South includes many more white people than negroes, and that the total problem of tenancy far transcends its racial aspects and "menaces the entire economic future of the region." A far reaching program of government aid to ownership is seen as the only remedy.

In 1930 of 3,088,111 farms in the thirteen southern states, fifty-eight per cent, or 1,789,000 were cultivated by tenants, of whom 1,091,000 were white and 698,000 colored. In the case of cotton farms the prevalence of tenancy ran to seventy-one per cent, and in certain Black Belt regions to eighty per cent and upward. Due to the agricultural depression of the ninteteen-twenties, the number of white tenants increased in ten years by 200,000 through loss of their farms and otherwise. In the same period the percentage of cotton farm tenancy went up from sixty-five per cent to the 1930 level of seventy-one.

Since 1930, according to Dr. Vance's report, the Federal limitation of cotton acreage, the steady decline of cotton exports due to tariff barriers, and the rapid increase of cotton production abroad, which in 1935 promises to exceed that of the United States, have undercut the living of multitudes of tenant farmers wholly dependent upon cotton and have cast others entirely adrift without accessing to the land or other assured means of support. As a result millions of people who normally should be making their living on the soil have been thrown on relief. Last year in the thirteen states covered by this study—the nine coast states from Virginia to Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee and Kentucky—one family in every four was on relief and the total relief budget was $212,000,000, with little prospect of improvement unless some means can be found of making these people self-supporting.

Even for those who are so lucky as to retain their status of tenancy, the report envisions a hopeless, debt-burdened future, "with as meager a diet of fatback, corn pone, and molasses as can be found in the world's agriculture." "The plantation," it points out, "is not interested in feeding its tenants with the vegetables, milk, meats, and fruits of a beneficent soil and clime; it wants only its cash crop of cotton." The region, it is held, "has paid a terrible price" for its concentration of landholdings and its one-crop system, under which "even the large landowners have not uniformly profited."

The report concludes that the South is confronted with the necessary choice between continued crop regimentation, with subsidies for idle lands and relief for displaced tenants and laborers, or a program of government aid by which multitudes now tenants may become self-supporting landowners, after the example of Ireland, Denmark, and other countries. It seems obvious to the committee that the continuance of the present system offers no hope, and that the latter course will be not only far better, but also cheaper in the long run. Supporting this view, the report points out the peculiar suitability of the South to maintain a prosperous and happy population of home owners, and quotes the words of the Southern leader, Henry W. Grady, when fifty years ago he visualized the restoration to home ownership of the South's landless millions: "When every farmer in the South shall eat bread from his own field and meat from his own [illegible] there shall be the breaking of the fullness

Dawson, Ga., News
March 28, 1935

## SOUTH'S TENANT FARM IS SHARPLY CRITICIZED

### RAPPED BY COMMITTEE ON MINORITY GROUPS IN RECOVERY WORK.

The south's system of tenant farming is criticized sharply by the committee on minority groups in the economic recovery.

"Any self-respecting peasant proprietor in France would view with loathing the condition of a Mississippi cotton cropper," the committee reported of its year's investigation in the south under the financial aegis of the Rosenwald foundation.

Share croppers and tenants, both black and white, the committee asserted, were "in a state of peonage that approaches slavery," and it condemned the operation of the landlord credit system as "a thoroughly reprehensible system of extortion."

**Peasant Proprietorship Recommended**

A program of peasant proprietorship ndividual land owning, is recommended as the solution to the problems in which the south has been involved by wreckage of its economic bulwark of cotton production.

The committee is composed of Edwin E. Embree, of Chicago, president of the Julius Rosenwald fund; Dr. Will W. Alexander, of Atlanta, director of the commission on inter-racial co-operation, and Professor Charles S. Johnson, head of the department of social research of Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn.

With publication of the report, Norman Thomas, socialist leader who figured in the recent Arkansas share cropper revolt, declared independently that cotton crop curtailment contracts under the AAA have militated against the southern Arkansas share cropper, causing eviction of hundreds from plantation shacks because government control of the cotton crop lessened the need of labor.

The committee, detailing the results of governmental economics in the south, declared of this phase:

"It is but the blunt truth to say in conclusion that under the present system the land owner is more and more protected from risk by government activity while the tenant is left open to risks on every side."

The south's problem is no longer the negro problem, the report stated, since the bulk of tenants is white with white tenancy increasing. Half the negro tenants and one-third the white tenants are share croppers, it said.

**"Time to Face Situation."**

"The time has come, it seems, for the cotton south to admit the gravity of its problems and to face a long-time situation," the report continued. "Although one accepts the depression as a temporary thing, the world cotton situation points to forced changed in the south's cotton system.

"With declining exports and increasing foreign cotton production, the south stands face to face with a choice.

"It may choose continued regimentation of agricultural production with subsidies for released lands and relie for displaced tenants and agricultura laborers.

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Sylacauga, Ala., Advance
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## SOUTH TOLD MUST DIVORCE COTTON

New York—Following a year's study of conditions in the South, the committee on minority groups in the economic recovery recommends drastic readjustments of the South's "excessive devotion to cotton, its land tenure system, its out-moded credit system and the peculiar economic status assigned the lowest level negro farmers."

The report filled 250 pages. The study was financed by $50,000 from Julius Rosenwald Foundation and has been brought to the attention of President Roosevelt.

The committee found that the South "with declining exports and increasing foreign cotton production," stands face to face with a choice.

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Agriculture–1933
Condition of.

Study made under auspices of Julius Rosenwald Fund

# ROSENWALD FUND RURAL EXPLORATION COMMITTEE REPORT FINDINGS IN MEETING AT FISK

HAVE LIVED PERSONALLY THROUGH CONDITIONS SURROUNDING RURAL TENANTS AND SHARECROPPERS

## Composed Of Two Distinct Groups

NASHVILLE, Tenn., May 23. — (ANP) — Climaxing a year's intensive study of the educational and economic situation facing both the white and blacks of the south, the Rural Exploration Conference, financed by the Rosenwald Fund, met recently at Fisk university.

Probably no more careful study of the circumstances in which the three million Negroes and five million whites which form the families of the tenants and sharecroppers of the cotton plantations of the South has ever been made than this one. The experts making the study under the direction of Dr. Charles S. Johnson, Edwin R. Embree and Dr. Will H. Alexander, have been living personally through the conditions which surround these people. From their surveys have come the material recently made public by the Committee of Three and the report on "The Farm System and School," both put out by the Rosenwald Fund. Legislation now pending in Congress, the Bankhead bill in particular, is founded principally on these reports.

The conference is composed of two distinct groups, one of councilors and one of explorers. The councilor group consists of the following:

Dr. W. A. Alexander, director, Commission on Inter-racial Cooperation, Atlanta, Ga.; Mrs. Jessie H. Benjamin, instructor in Rural Education, Forsythe Normal school, Georgia; Dr. John J. Coss Columbia university, New York City; Dr. Michael M. Davis, director of Medical Services, Julius Rosenwald Fund, Chicago; Mr. J. C. Dixon, Georgia State Department of Education, Atlanta; Mr. Edwin R. Embree, president, Julius Rosenwald Fund, Chicago; Mr. Lee M. Favrot, southern representative of the General Education Board Mr. Burton Fowler, Tower Hill school. Wilmington, Delaware; Dr. Charles S. Johnson, director, Department of Social Science, Fisk University; Dr. Chas H. Judd, director, Department of Education, University of Chicago Mr. A. C. Lewis, Louisiana State Department of Education, Baton Rouge; Mr. Fred McCuistion, Association of College and Secondary Schools of the Southern States, Nashville; Dr. B. Schrieke, director of Education of the Dutch East Indies, Batavia, Java; Mr. and Mrs. James F. Simon, Julius Rosenwald Fund, Chicago; Dr. Lloyd Warner division of Anthropology, Harvard university, Cambridge, Mass.; Dr Arthur D. Wright, president, Anna T. Jeanes Fund and John F. Slater Fund, Washington, D. C.; Dr. Geo. F. Zook, director, American Council of Education, Washington, D. C.

The exploration group consists of: Miss Florence R. Beatty, graduate (1933) of Fisk university; graduate student at University of Illinois; teacher in public schools of Cairo, Illinois; stationed in Poynter, Ark., and Columbia, La. Mr. Horace Mann Bond, dean-elect of the undergraduate college of Dillard university, New Orleans, author of Education of the Negro; Mrs. Horace Mann Bond, graduate of Fisk university; Mrs. Elizabeth Perry Cannan, instructor at Spelman college, made demonstration of conducting a one-teacher school as a part of Spelman summer normal course, stationed at Red Oak school, Georgia; Mrs. Catherine J. Duncan, graduate of Fisk university, Jeanes supervisor in Georgia, stationed at Red Oak school, Ga.; Mr. Buford H. Junker, graduate student in anthropology at Harvard university, stationed at Perry, Ga.; Miss Ruth Lockman, graduate of Emory university, Atlanta, teacher in public schools of Georgia, stationed at Fair Play school, Georgia; Mrs. Estelle Massey Riddle, graduate nurse, formerly on staff of Freedmen's Hospital, Washington, D. C., president, National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses, stationed at Calhoun, La.; Mr. E. C. Morganroth, teacher in experimental school in Ravinia, Illinois, stationed in Fitzhugh Community, Arkansas; Miss Narvie Purifoy, graduate (1934) of Livingston college, North Carolina, teacher in one-room rural school at the age of eighteen, stationed at Mangham, La., Poynter, Ark.; Mr. John E. Wilson, graduate (1934) of Emory university, Atlanta, Ga., stationed at Fair Play Community, Georgia; Mr. Lewis Jones, graduate of Fisk university, stationed at Menefee, Ark.

The guests at the Fisk meeting were: Dr. Hollis Caswell, George Peabody Colelge for Teachers, Nashville; Mr. John Gammon, principal, Fitzhugh school, Arkansas; Mr. Ed McCuistion, director of Certification and Teacher Training, State Department of Education, Little Rock, Ark.; Mr. S. L. Smith, director for the Southern Office, Julius Rosenwald Fund, Nashville. Tenn.

# *Drastic Changes in Dixie Urged in Survey Report*

### Land Tenure System Especially Criticized by Committee's Findings

NEW YORK, March 20 (AP).—Drastic readjustments of the South's "excessive devotion to cotton, its land tenure system, its out-moded credit system, and the peculiar economic status assigned the lowest level Negro farmers" were recommended in a summarized report made public today by the committee on minority groups in the economic recovery.

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Its 250-page report followed a year's study of agricultural, economic, and social conditions in the South, which was financed by $50,000 from the Rosenwald foundation. It was submitted to the department of agriculture.

The report has also been brought to the attention of President Roosevelt.

**"Face to Face With Choice"**

"With declining exports and increasing foreign cotton production, the South stands face to face with a choice," the committee found.

"It may choose continued regimentation of agricultural production, with subsidies for released lands and relief for displaced tenants and agricultural laborers.

"Or it may decide that this is too great a price to pay for concentrated landownership. In such a case America might well follow the example of Ireland and Denmark and embark upon a program of government aid to peasant proprietorship."

The committee emphasized that the South's problem was not a Negro problem but one of tenants and share-croppers, both white and black "in a state of peonage that approaches slavery."

"As a matter of fact, the Negro no longer furnishes the bulk of cotton tenants," the report asserts. "There are 1,091,944 white tenants in the South to 698,839 colored tenants. While one may not be surprised to note that over half the Negro tenants are croppers, it is startling to learn that over one-third of the white tenants are in the same poverty-stricken class.

DR. W. W. ALEXANDER

DR. E. R. EMBREE

**White Tenancy Increasing**

"White tenancy is increasing. From 1920 to 1930, a period of increasing difficulty in cotton production, Negro tenants in the South decreased by some 2,000, while white tenants increased by more than 200,000."

Commenting on the report, Embree said the committee regards the Bankhead bill now before congress as "an utterly inadequate solution of the situation." He estimated that it would provide small farms, up to 40 acres for 500,000 families, plus homes, livestock, and feed.

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Agriculture - 1935
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CHRONICLE

Humboldt, Tenn.

MAR 21 1935

## WHO IS GUILTY?

This paper has contended that the ill condition of tenants on cotton farms is due, not to the owners of the lands cultivated to the staple, so much as it is to the general impoverished condition of agriculture; that the same disease that afflicts the tenant afflicts the land-owner. Neither party to the crop realized even as much as a dollar-a-day for his labor or any sort of recompense for his investment during the period from 1930 to 1933, and this is a culmination of more than ten hard years that preceded.

Now comes a plain letter, published in the Commercial Appeal, in the department "Letters to the Editor," which puts the situation so clearly it ought to be featured by all fair-dealing newspapers in America. There is no sense, justice or fairness in laying the heft of tenant troubles on the land-owner, who only shares sorrows with them. The letter, written by Mr. W. C. Neill, mentioned above, follows:

### BOOTLEG SLAVERY.

To The Commercial Appeal:

The folowing letter has gone to Time:

"Where economic slavery generally exists, the portion of tenants and sharecroppers therein is not necessarily 'bootleg.' Could anyone, heretofore perturbed at the physical slavery of southern negroes, imagine that these negroes' condition has been materially bettered by the trading of their physical slavery for a joint yoke with their former masters in economic slavery imposed by policies of the government which abolished the other variety?

"Any crop necessarily selling in an 'unprotected' market, partly foreign, partly hostile, partly limited by exchange difficulties; but of which, nevertheless, production supplies must be bought in a 'protected' market—is a 'poverty crop,' and the producers thereof are economic slaves—be they sharecroppers, tenants, landowners, whites or negroes.

"If there be a duty to provide for tenants evicted as a consequence of restricted production of the 'poverty crop,' on which does the duty devolve—the economically enslaved, debt-ridden landlord—or the government responsible for policies that inflict poverty on all producers of such crops?"

Yours truly, W. C. NEILL.

# Federal Judge Rules Against Tenant Farmers In AAA Rental Payments

Advertiser 9-17-35

MEMPHIS, TENN., Sept. 16. — (AP) — Southern tenant farmers were told today that they can not collect from the government in cases where they charge landlords have withheld from them their share of Agricultural Adjustment Administration rentals and cotton acreage reduction payments.

Judge John D. Martin, of Federal District Court, who several months ago held the AAA act valid under the general welfare clause of the Constitution, today sustained a Government demurrer and dismissed suits brought by Harry L. Davis and Raymond Taylor, Haywood County, Tennessee, tenant farmers, who sought to collect from the Government their share of payments, assertedly already paid to landowners.

R. G. Draper, assistant district attorney, declared that if the suits were permitted, "it would open the way to a multitude of similar suits" arising from the bitter tenant-landlord controversies throughout the South.

Sustaining the demurrer, Judge Martin said to allow the government to be sued for a payment already made would be "contrary to sound policy."

"The tenant," Judge Martin said, "is not without remedy. Instead of wanting to sue the United States, he should sue the landlord, who collected the tax. Should tenants be allowed to stand by and permit these wrong payments—remember this act was of necessity hastily drawn up and administered—and then expect the Government to pay again money it had already paid out allegedly to the wrong parties?"

Should this be allowed, he said, it would mean the Government would have to pay double to remunerate the tenant.

The tenants said they did not receive Government payments for acreage plowed up and taken out of production in 1933 and 1934. Taylor charged his name was forged to a rider to the Government contract instructing the Government to pay all the rental money to the landlord.

Davis charged that O. U. Knight, agricultural agent for Haywood County refused to recognize his rights as managing tenant and would not permit him to become a party to the reduction contract.

Agriculture - 1935

Texas -

Condition of.

# TEXAS REBELLING AT COTTON POLICIES

Ginners Threaten Defiance of Bankhead Law as Useless Extravagance.

4-14-35

By DALE MILLER.

Editorial Correspondence, THE NEW YORK TIMES.

DALLAS, Texas, April 12.—Faith among Texas Democrats in New Deal agricultural policies, which has wavered perceptibly on more than one occasion lately as statistics continue to reveal a decline in cotton consumption at home and abroad, came nearer to toppling this week when Texas ginners threatened defiance of the Bankhead law.

Ordinarily, the ultimatum laid down to the Federal Government by the recent State convention of the Texas Cotton Ginners Association in Dallas would have aroused resentment among the people because of its severity and political heresy. It condemned the processing tax and demanded that Congress either repeal it or reimburse ginners for the $5,000,000 spent in collecting it, and frankly declared that Texas ginners would defy the law and institute vigorous court action against it if Congress did not comply.

**Public Not Shocked.**

Silence in the press and among the people greeted this latest attack upon the AAA—a silence which regimented New Dealers could only interpret as alarming.

As a matter of fact, public sympathy here is growing for the forgotten men of the cotton industry. They are the pickers, ginners, compressors, shippers and others identified with the industry whose welfare is determined not by the price of cotton but by the tonnage of cotton moving in the channels of commerce.

Consequently, when the 1,500 ginners flung down the gauntlet in their State convention they did not distinguish themselves as isolated recalcitrants stirring up trouble. They have a real grievance, one that is shared by the humblest peon picker in the field and the most influential exporter. Fewer bales mean less work for all.

**Farmer at the Bottom.**

But the individual who still occupies the integral position politically in the cotton cycle is the farmer, and if all were well on the cotton farms there probably would be little active sympathy with the plight of those others in the industry who are bearing a terrific burden in the restriction program. All is not well on the cotton farms, however. Cotton prices are still depressed, markets are being rapidly and perhaps permanently lost, and the idea seems at last to be dawning upon the farmer that his higher cotton price during the past two years is a fictitious one brought about by the devaluation of the dollar.

So what Texas seems to be swinging around to is a concerted movement in the direction of a permanent agricultural program.

**WALLER ON THE AAA—**

In talking with C. H. Waller, state leader of the Negro extension forces of Texas, who is now on leave as field representative of the cotton division of the triple A, I got the other side of the picture of the effect of the AAA program on the Negro farmer, especially the tenant farmer. - 35

Prof. Waller said that the facts on file in his office prove conclusively that, while there has been some injustice and hardships here and there, the overwhelming evidence shows that the Negro tenant farmer in Texas has been benefitted by the triple A program. Coming from a man of Prof. Waller's standing and long years of experience among the Negro farmers of Texas, this statement is entitled to the highest consideration, and those who dispute it should be required to submit the proof of their contentions, as Prof. Waller says he is in position to do.

Prof. Waller was loud in his praise of the impartial attitude of Director H. H. Williamson, of the extension service in Texas, and of Director Cully H. Cobb, of the cotton division of the AAA, and other leaders of the extension service in Texas and the triple A in the nation. He says that these men are all for a square deal for the Negro farmer. In Prof. C. H. Waller they have a champion who has the confidence of the people of Texas.

Agriculture-1935
Condition of.

Virginia.

## *The Negro Farmer In Tidewater*

THE United States Census Bureau has just issued a tabulation showing the number of farms operated, and the number owned, by Negroes in 10 Tidewater Virginia counties and two northeastern North Carolina counties—Camden and Currituck—revealing a rather surprising percentage of ownership upon the whole, especially in certain counties.

In Elizabeth City county, in which Hampton is situated, there are 56 farms with an acreage of 1,236 and a valuation of $154,765, of which 44, or 78.6 are owned. James City county ranks a little higher, colored farmers owning 83.5 per cent of 469 with an acreage of 27,857 and valued at $900,-083. Warwick county ranks a little higher still in ownership, the percentage being 84.0, while York county tops the list with an ownership percentage of 95.7 of 235 farms with an acreage of 4,144 valued at $405,450.

Tenantry and share-cropping are small worries in the life of the colored farmers of the above named Virginia counties. Few people perhaps, had any idea that any such conditions existed anywhere in the Old Dominion.

There are other counties in Tidewater where the race makes a good showing in farm ownership, very good, in fact, when the large colored population of the counties is taken into consideration.

Nansemond county has 918 farms operated by members of the race, with a total acreage of 40,117. These farms are valued at $1,865,160 and members of the race own 404, or 44.0 of them. Northampton county, on the Eastern Shore, also shows up well with 392 farms operated, acreage of 13,342, valued at $2,075,320. There are 148 owners which bring the percentage up to 37.8.

Norfolk county has 302 race operated farms with an acreage of 11,776 and money valuation of $674,680. There are 154 owners for a percentage of 50.9. Princess Anne, our adjoining county, does even better. There are 380 farms, acreage of 12,-720 and valuation of $1,081,330. There are 221 owners for a percentage of 58.2.

We think that this is an admirable showing for the colored farmers of the Tidewater counties. That their tenancy afflictions are no greater is something to be proud of. That their thrift, stability and resourcefulness under difficulties are so evident is more important still.

Agriculture - 1935
& Improvement of.

# 11,604 Alabama Farmer Used Electricity In 1934

Advertiser 3-24-35

More Alabama farmers are using electricity than ever before in the history of the State, reports E. C. Easter of the Alabama Power Company. He gives statistics showing that 11,604 farmers used electricity during 1934 as compared with only 240 in 1924—10 years earlier.

Statistics also show that on June 30, 1934, a total of 424,000 farmers in the United States were using electricity compared with 698,786 in 1931. The U. S. Department of Agriculture also reports that the rural users of electricity are increasing. Not only are farmers finding electricity useful in their activities, but the farm women are finding that it is removing many of the burdens of homemaking. It is also useful in preserving fresh fruits and vegetables.

## Negro Farmer Sends First Cotton Boll

Elijah Lynum, of Manila, one of our colored subscribers, sends in the first full grown cotton boll of the season. Elijah writes that crops are looking good in his section after heavy rains. Early corn, he says, is getting hard, pots are well filled with green peas, sorghum will be ready for grinding by the latter part of July, and cotton is looking good in spite of its numerous pests. In conclusion Elijah sounds a rather odd note for a farmer. "It seems that we are getting most of the breaks," he says, "and if we will work we will get what we are striving for."

Montgomery Advertiser 7-28-35

**PASTURE FIT FOR BARE FEET**

A story from Auburn by P. O. Davis to the effect that crop conditions in Alabama are the best in five years only serves to confirm the opinion of those who have ridden over the State's highways recently and seen for themselves the promising prospects.

As long as Alabama is able to feed herself and have a little money from the cotton crop, there need be no fear. Our resources are ample to support our people if put to the proper use.

As an example of what can be accomplished by a little foresight and planning we cite a recent letter from Dr. Carver, the sage of Tuskegee, who, in addition to being an authority on many other subjects, knows as much about our native grasses and clovers as anyone of our acquaintance.

Describing a portion of the pasture land which surround Tuskegee Institute, Dr. Carver writes:

"At this writing, the ground is practically a solid sward with the following grasses and forage plants: Bermuda grass, luxuriant, from six to ten inches high in many places; Dallas, Florida carpet, and one or two other Paspalums are unusually fine; a bunch grass thrives in many places, and stands from eight to fifteen inches high; in rich, moist, semi-shaded places a grass resembling Bermuda makes a dense turf; Johnson grass is especially fine where the soil is rich; crab grass and crowfoot have come in wherever they are not crowded out."

The development of the pasture lands described by Dr. Carver required no particular attention except an occasional mowing over a period of 25 years since first being seeded.

The foregoing is not the first letter we have received from Dr. Carver on the subject of pastures. He is enthusiastic over the possibilities of developing the cattle industry in Alabama, and realizes that good pastures are necessary to achieve that end.

We quote from another of Dr. Carver's descriptions because it is more convincing than anything we might write:

"The plot of ground consisted of approximately one-tenth of an acre (a bit of lawn) which had been sown two years ago in white clover, yellow clover and smooth vetch. Several native grasses had crept in.

"Ten heavy milking Holstein cows were all lying down, peacefully chewing their cuds, having eaten all they could.

"When I came to Tuskegee nearly 38 years ago this same spot of land was a badly washed, pine barren, so poor that not even weeds would grow on it."

Dr. Carver's description is enough to give anyone who has not forgotten his youth a burning desire to take off his shoes and walk through such a pasture.

Every man who owns an acre of Alabama land should consider the potential possibilities at hand and act accordingly—the whole future of the State is dependent upon the use our farmers make of their lands.

# *Envoys Of Field And Factory Trade Views At Auburn Rally*

Montgomery Advertiser 8-2-35

By ATTICUS MULLIN

AUBURN, ALA., July 31.—Farmers and industrialists of Alabama, already close together, again clasped hands in friendly reunion here today and discussed mutual problems in a conference which brought close to 2,500 interested persons together.

The day marked another milestone on the road to better agricultural and business conditions in Alabama. When you see large and small manufacturers mingling in a spirit of cameraderie with farmers, with the one for all and all for one slogan uppermost, results are certain.

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**Birmingham sent down a bunch of executives in the heavy industries line. We saw President Perry, of the Tennessee Company, and Hugh Morrow, president of the Sloss Sheffield Steel and Iron Company. And both were on the day's speaking program and they brought the message from industry to the interested farmers. We saw Ashton Collins, the head of the Associated Industries of Alabama, an organization whose membership includes thousands of manufacturers in Alabama. And he spoke of the day's program.**

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Coal operators were in attendance including the DeHardelebens, Ab Aldredge and many others. James L. Davidson, secretary or something of the Alabama Mining Institute, was on hand. We saw some bankers as well as industrialists and farmers. The banker of today has to be both an industrialist and a farmer because many banks have 'inherited' industries and farms.

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Many legislators were in attendance. Shell Toomer, Isham Dorsey and Nim Denson of the legislative forces from Lee, washed out two or three shirts apiece entertaining the visitors. We saw such men as J. B. Reynolds, of Dale; Parish, of Henry; Glover, of Henry; Hendley, of Covington; Simpson, of Jefferson, and many others. They came to see Auburn, hear about what was being done at Auburn. They were "from Missouri" and they were shown.

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**Dr. L. N. Duncan, president of Auburn and head of the extension service of the State, was here, there and everywhere. Dr. Duncan is doing a great work at Auburn. He was doing a great work before he became president of Auburn and it is certain that Auburn is in for one of the brightest decades in her history under the able leadership of an Alabama-raised, Auburn-educated man. The time, the place and the man met when Dr. Duncan became president of Auburn.**

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We ran across a dozen or more county agents. There were more on the ground but we did not see all of them. The county agent is the firing pin to the extension service agricultural gun. The county agents, to our mind, are about the most valuable men we have in Alabama today. They are going about their work in every county in Alabama and they are making Alabama acres valuable acres. We saw such men as Arnold, Edmonson, Sizemore and many others. And Walter Randolph was there, a towering giant of a man in stature with a brain in keeping with his physique. These men and others like them are adding millions to the productive capacity of Alabama every year. They are soldiers in a cause. They wear no uniforms and do not parade to the music of a band but they are available as friendly advisers to every cross roads point and every backwoods and hill farmer in Alabama, whether he is a one horse, one bull or one mule farmer or an "agriculturist" with tractors.

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**N. C. Peddy, dairyman and farmer of Lee, on the old Notasulga-Loachapoka road, opened our eyes with a display of watermelons. Mr. Peddy had six or eight melons at Auburn, the largest weighing 98 pounds. It was the largest melon we had ever seen. On the Shelby County farm on which we did our farm work, a 30-pound watermelon was the signal for a visit by neighboring farmers for miles around. Mr. Peddy had several melons weighing over 80 pounds. If Mr. Peddy ever turns his hands to raising chickens he will probably exhibit some each year larger than the ordinary ostrich and dangerous to human beings.**

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**Bob Goode, Alabama's commissioner of agriculture and industries, was on hand. We heard a lot of nice things said about Bob. As a matter of fact the farmers of Alabama are talking about Bob Goode as the next governor of Alabama. Bob is not running for governor and is not behind the talk but if he could hear all the good things being said about him he would no doubt get pink behind the ears. Bob Goode has everything that it takes to make a great governor and if the agricultural interests of Alabama finally push him into a race we'd hate to be the man to run against him.**

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Agriculture - 1935
Improvement of.

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phenagled an invitation to that barbecue and in company with Jimmy Parrish, of Montgomery, we sat down to a table with a half chicken, a half watermelon, plenty of potato salad, tomatoes and pickles and bread and with the efficient Boy Scouts of Auburn standing by to see that every want was fulfilled.

John Ivey is a master in his line. We gathered from him that the barbecued chickens were of the leghorn variety, weighing two pounds, and with the patented sauce Mr. Ivey uses, they would delight the gourmets of old Rome if they could rise up and partake of them.

# Cooperation Between Agriculture And Industry Stressed At Auburn Meeting

AUBURN, ALA., July 31.—(Special)—Alabama farmers, agriculturists and industrialists—1,200 strong—today celebrated the first anniversary of close cooperation between agriculture and industry in the State by holding a joint meeting at which Ashton B. Collins, Birmingham, manager of Associated Industries of Alabama, presented Dr. L. N. Duncan, president Alabama Polytechnic Institute and director of the State extension service, a Siamese twin birthday cake, one cake representing agriculture and the other industry.

Following the presentation of the cake, three prominent industrial leaders called agriculture and industry brothers and asserted that both must prosper before either can enjoy permanent prosperity. The speakers were Mr. Collins, J. L. Perry, president Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company, Birmingham; and Hugh Morrow, president of the Sloss-Sheffield Steel and Iron Company, Birmingham.

"In every way, industry in Alabama and the South wants to cooperate with agriculture in the improvement of its products, in marketing, in rehabilitation work and building, and in securing improved transportation facilities," Mr. Perry declared. "If there are any old prejudices existing between agriculture and industry or between sections of this State, let us get together and exchange points of view with one another."

In describing the two groups as brothers, Mr. Perry stated that "industry delves into the fruits of the good earth for coal, ore, stone, gathers timber and cotton and oil, water provides transportation and power, and from these products of the earth there are developed thousands of finished products just as the farmer develops from that which he produces from the ground." The speaker then declared that both agriculture and industry within Alabama and the South "want to produce more goods of a wider diversification to be used and exchanged in increasing volume and, in turn, keeping larger numbers of people employed gainfully, and finding greater human happiness."

"If there is one thing the industrial South needs most today it is an increase in the purchasing power of its home markets, and as agriculture solves its problems and finds new markets it will go hand in hand and in like proportions with industry as industry finds new markets," he declared.

Hugh Morrow declared that he is personally in favor of retaining the processing tax in order that farmers may continue to receive benefit payments, but warned that if a constitutional amendment is necessary to keep the tax that the amendment be carefully worded to see that State rights are not taken away.

Mr. Morrow emphasized the importance of close cooperation between agriculture and industry, stating that there is no antagonism between these groups. He also stated that he is convinced that industry is more dependent upon agriculture than is agriculture upon industry.

Farm credits were discussed by Jesse B. Hearin, president of the Production Credit Association and Robert A. Beeland, president of the Federal Land Bank of New Orleans. Mr. Beeland stated that the land bank loans in Alabama are more substantial and in better conditions than any other State in his section. He complimented the State farmers for handling their loans in such an admirable way.

In the afternoon the farmers and industrialists were shown over the State Experiment Station by Dean M. J. Funchess and his staff.

The annual meeting of the Alabama Farm Bureau Federation will start Thursday with an address by Edward A. O'Neal, president American Farm Bureau Federation, and Mrs. Charles W. Sewell, administrative director of the national organization.

Farm bureau committees were named today by President Edwards as follows:

Resolutions: Frank Earle, chairman, Baldwin; J. O. DeLoney, Dale; L. S. Fluker, Sumter; J. H. Tolley, Limestone; W. L. Rasberry, Fayette; Ben H. Andrews, Chambers; and W. E. Deer, Monroe.

Credentials: B. H. Lightfoot, Pike; J. N. Dennis, Chilton; G. F. Pinson, Coffee; J. H. Holland, Winston; and R. C. Burnett, St. Clair.

Constitution and by-laws: C. W. Rittenour, Montgomery; John R. Rushing, Cullman; W. S. Sconyers, Henry; Willie Shelton, Lawrence; T. H. Hendon, Randolph; and Ed Pritchett, Wilcox.

Nominating: S. A. Burns, Talladega; J. H. Thompson, DeKalb; W. W. Dunn, Mobile; T. J. Luckie, Dallas; and E. D. Burwell, Madison.

Auditing: E. L. Turner, Calhoun; Ida B. Vail, Macon; and F. M. Howard, Autauga.

# Weil Brothers Forecast Increase In American Cotton Consumption

Weil Brothers, Montgomery cotton merchants, forecast in their latest semi-monthly crop letter of Aug. 15 a production exceeding the Government estimate of slightly less than 12,000,000 bales. Though impeded by showers, the picking season is well under way throughout the southern and middle cotton belt.

Of especial interest to producers, manufacturers and consumers of the American staple was the announcement by Weil Brothers that conditions abroad point to increased consumption of U. S. cotton. An apparently over-sold Brazilian crop, of a much lower quality range, was reported to be selling for more than the American crop.

The crop letter in full follows:

"August weather so far may be considered very satisfactory. High temperatures throughout the belt have been good for the growth of cotton and have arrested, somewhat, the progress of leaf worm and weevil. Scattered showers in the eastern belt have been followed by reports of weevil activity and also of shedding, always attendant to maturity. As a whole, the crop forged ahead and points to a production exceeding the Government estimate.

"Picking is general throughout the southern and extends into the middle sections. The movement is well under way, though impeded by showers. The early receipts show excellent character and staple and, in fact, better preparation and handling than we have seen in several years. Before the Government report 80 per cent of the new receipts were held in anticipation of a loan announcement; now 40 per cent to 50 per cent are being sold.

"Without a substantial increase from present price levels, we may consider the available supply a very little more than this year's crop. The financial condition of the farmer was never better and all his crops are bountiful—corn, hay and hogs. Nor must it be lost sight of that southern banks would be glad and large lenders at comparatively low interest rates. After the first liberal movement, therefore, the remainder rests in strong hands, yet there are few farmers who consider 11 cents to 12 cents an unsatisfactory price for this year's crop.

"Domestic demand continues on a hand-to-mouth basis, which absorbs the present small movement. Processing tax uncertainty limits interest in forward shipments; but dry goods shelves are sparsely stocked. There is small demand from export sources. However, last year's consumption of foreign growths ate heavily into their carry-over—especially in Egypt and India. An apparently oversold Brazilian crop, of a much lower quality range, is now priced higher than our own. All this undoubtedly points to greater consumption of Americans."

## SENATOR BANKHEAD'S TENANT BILL

Editor The Advertiser:

Senator John H. Bankhead of Alabama has recently introduced a bill in the Senate for the Government to appropriate $1,000,000,000 to enable tenant farmers to own their homes and farms. The Advertiser has carried one or two strong editorials endorsing this bill, but I have been suprised to see how few the others that have shown any interest in it.

This measure, according to my way of thinking, if it could be enacted into a law and impartially administered would be to the South the greatest boom it has had since the emancipation of the slaves. It would be the greatest preventive relief measure passed during this administration.

The old tenant system has completely broken down and at the bottom of it is the cause of more than a million former tenants and sharecroppers being scattered all over this country in the large cities today with no jobs and nothing to do.

Give the man who works the soil and has a desire to do so, a chance to own his home and farm, and you will get the best out of him. He will go on improving his home and farm from year to year thereby increasing its value and making the community, county, and State richer. With such a program, the landlords, the merchants, the farmer, and even the churches and schools will prosper and grow richer. But it is so hard for man to see that the more his neighbor has the more he will have. Thus far his economic theory has been based upon selfishness. In the long run all such theories will fail as it has done in this case.

For 50 years or more now the tenant farmer has been paying from $3 to $6 a year per acre for rent. He has paid for this land three or four times at the rate of $30 or more per acre and yet he does not own one inch of it. His house is more delapidated than ever and his farm has deteriorated to the extent that he can hardly make rent to say nothing of a livelihood for his family. What incentive is there to keep one on the farm when he finds out that he has become of age and is free?

This depression has been a long time coming upon us and we must not expect its departure in a day. Temporary relief and temporary jobs will help, but if we are to have permanent prosperity it must be secured by the slow process of making the country a worthwhile place in which to live.

We must not only prime the pump, but we must find a spring beneath in order that the stream of prosperity be perennial. We have over built the cities, now we must build the country.

We owe Senator John H. Bankhead a great debt of gratitude for what he has done and is doing in this direction.

W. J. EDWARDS,
President,
Black Belt Improvement League,
Snow Hill, Ala.

# What Negro Did With 15 Acres And One Steer

It isn't every farmer that could take 15 acres of land, and a steer, and make two bales of cotton, 75 bushels of corn, 15 gallons of syrup, 50 bushels of sweet potatoes, 15 bushels of peanuts, 10 bushels of peas and half a ton of hay, but that is what Leonard Motley, negro rehabilitation farmer of Autauga County did, the Resettlement Administration announces.

This subscriber says the report, has a family of six, and they had been on relief for six months when they were transferred to the rehabilitation farm program.

For making the farm, Motley was advanced $54.60, which included capital goods requirements and subsistence. In addition to the harvest on his farm, he made a garden which supplied his family with fresh vegetables all through the year. He also accumulated 10 pigs and 12 chickens.

At the end of the year, Motley paid back his entire indebtedness with work on work projects. This left him the owner of his steer and farming equipment and all his crop.

Hattie Mims, a negro woman of Autauga County was an outstanding rehabilitation farmer of 1934. She had a family of three and they had been a on relief for 15 months and were unable to get any help towards making a crop until they were placed on the rehabilitation farm program.

Hattie was advanced a total of $111, which included capital goods requirements and subsistence. On 20 acres of land she raised one bale of cotton, 35 gallons of syrup, five bushels of peas, ten bushels of peanuts, 35 bushels of sweet potatoes, and one ton of hay. Her land had been sold for taxes before she was placed on the rehabilitation program. From the proceeds of the bale of cotton, she paid part of the back taxes, expecting to redeem the place with her next crop.

Hattie was retained on the rehabilitation program for 1935, and this time she asked for an advance of only $66.86 for capital goods requiements, though she doubled her farming acreage.

American Farm Bureau Federation.

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# COLORED FARMERS RECEIVED AT SESSION OF AMERICAN FEDERATION IN CHICAGO

## Well Known Leaders From Alabama In Great Meeting Addressed By President Roosevelt; Spokesman Says South Is Waking Up

Chicago, Dec. 19 (ANP)—For the first time in its history, Negro delegates were in attendance at the annual meeting of the American Farm Bureau Federation, the most important agricultural organization in the country, when it met in Chicago this week. The Negro representatives came from the very heart of the South, from the territory in which share croppers troubles have recently attracted attention and found not only a hearty welcome, but indications that greater interest is to be taken in the problems which affect the great body of Negro farmers.

A. W. Roper, R. W. Brown and Duncan McCall of Lowndes County, Ala., and P. J. Brown of Hale County were the delegates seen, although it was reported that delegates from Arkansas were on hand among the ten thousand delegates here. T. M. Campbell, Field Agent in the U. S. Department of Agriculture, was present representing the extension agents of the southern states. The colored residents attended the various meetings, occupied a box when President Roosevelt spoke at the International Live Stock Exposition and were generally objects of attention.

A spokesman of the group, who did not care to have his name used, expressed the opinion that the agricultural and industrial leaders of the South are beginning to realize that if the South is ever to take its place along with other progressive sections of the country, it must take the Negro farmer and tradesmen into the organization designed to aid all people engaged in those occupations.

Much of the present unrest and dissatisfaction among Negroes throughout the South today is due to the fact that they are not accorded these advantages. It is safe to say that the recent sporadic outbreaks and clashes between white landowners and sharecroppers in the cotton belt can be traced to people from the outside Communistic views who find fertile fields in which to promote their organizations among the depressed and discouraged Negro tenants.

It becomes a good step therefore according to this delegate, for the white South to court the friendship and good-will of his Negro neighbor by inviting him to take an active part in such organizations as the American Farm Bureau Federation. Another wise step he pointed out, has been the increase in the number of Negro extension agents which is taking place in the South. Alabama alone has nine new U. S. agents with five more to be appointed under a new ruling. Edward O'Neal, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation is a southerner, an Alabamian, but it is he who has taken the initiative in opening the door of the Federation to Negroes.

Florida

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## 'DISAPPEARING LAKE' AGAIN BECOMES DRY

Clearwater Sun 7/13/35

MOULTRIE, Ga., July 12.—(AP)—That disappearing lake, just south of here, in Florida, has done its tricks again, and are the cattle happy!

Lake Iamonia, covering about 12,000 acres, went dry recently and its silt-filled basin has become covered with rich, green grass. The cattle are grazing now where the lake once was.

One enterprising negro woman is selling more than $100 worth of milk a month to a cheese plant in Thomasville. A number of other residents have turned their attention to dairying, what with such a fine pasture.

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# Mechanical Cotton Picker May Displace Negro in South

*Editor's Note: Farm implement manufacturers long have cherished the idea of developing a mechanical cotton picker—a machine to take the place of the "darky" on the plantations of the old south. The following article describes progress that has been made toward perfecting the machine together with current comment on its significance.*

By HARMAN NICHOLS.

CHICAGO, Jan. 26.—(UP)—The old south stands at the gateway of a new era, agricultural experts said today.

The cotton picker, a mechanical device now being perfected, may replace the traditional tripod—the mule, the negro, the plow—on which the foundation of Dixie has rested since Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin 140 years ago.

This new implement, which manufacturers have been striving to perfect for nearly half a century, also may present a serious social problem in the lives of people living in one-sixth of the land area of the United States.

A member of the firm of the International Harvester Company, which exhibited a cotton picker during the first summer of a Century of Progress, said:

"Although we have been working on details of such a machine for many years, no successful one has been completed. It is only a matter of time, however, until these pickers will be put into practical operation."

**Revolution in Cotton.**

An article in the Americian Mercury by Oliver Carlson stirred up much comment on the possibility of a revolution in cotton.

The Mercury's article outlined the growth of the cotton kingdom, beginning with Whitney's gin, with its ingenious method of separating the cotton seed from the cotton fibre. The writer contrasted the north, with its efficient and numerous factories and numberless industries with the south, which sucks its livelihood from a solitary endeavor.

"The last great field of hand labor," the article ran, "is now being forced to give away to the machine. The key to complete mechanization of cotton has been discovered. The long and arduous path of its solution is strewn with the lives of a thousand unsuccessful inventors."

Designers of the new device, which someday will send thousands of negroes into another occupation—they know not what—John D. Rust and Mack D. Rust, were born and raised on a Texas cotton plantation. From early boyhood they were compelled to engage in the back-breaking task of picking cotton. The brothers spent nearly 10 years experimenting with the new machine.

The first test was made in the stubbled fields of Texas, where a fair degree of efficiency of the machine was reported. After more tests in the Mississippi delta region, where cotton grows as high as three and a half or four feet, the brothers were well on their way to creating a machine which was simple, inexpensive and durable.

**Experiment Successful.**

During one experiment the mechanical negro was said to have picked more cotton in seven and a half hours than a good hand picker could pick in an entire season, three and a half months.

Meantime, southern leaders considered the future of the countryside they love and hate. Is tenant farming at the end of its rope? How can a great plantation dispense with its many hands (each plantation has from 15 to 50 families—20 acres to the family)?

Will the old mule and the primitive plough be placed as memorials in the agricultural museums of the has-beens? Will the tumbled down shack, in which more than 4,000,000 souls, both black and white, live today be ripped from its foundation and burned? Will wage labor replace tenantry? Will the negro, not long since removed from slavery, be pushed into another territory?

These and other questions are studied by leaders of sociology.

W. F. Ogburn, professor at the University of Chicago, foresaw a deep problem and wrote:

"The development and adoption of a cotton-picker in the south might be a serious blow to the marginal farmer. Large-scale farming would be encouraged. The migration of the negro to the cities would also be stimulated and this would affect race relations and the future of the negro race."

**Rapid Change Seen.**

The Mercury quoted O. E. Baker, of the bureau of agricultural economics of the United States department of agriculture.

"In the cotton belt mechanization may be rapid, particularly where the plantation system of ownership and operation is extensively developed, provided a successful cotton-picker is placed on the market. The cotton-picker may compel a migration of magnitude unparalleled in our history from the hill lands as well as from the level lands of the cotton belt."

Another authority said:

"To the wide-awake planter, the cotton picker means a chance to pull himself out of the doldrums and break the stranglehold of the banker. He realizes that plough-under programs, crop limitations, and artificially high prices for his produce do not solve his problems."

Planters quoted by the Mercury were unanimous in their approval of the economic possibilities of the new picker, whose inventors claim a farmer can sell cotton at 5 cents a pound and realize a handsome profit (the price of cotton today ranges from 10.50 to 15 cents a pound.)

**HERITAGE OF THE SOUTH**

At the same time that the South pleads poverty and asks for government aid, it resents any criticism of existing conditions, and becomes indignant at interference from the outside. Adverse foreign comments on local conditions immediately create a belligerent attitude among Southerners who claim that no one who lives in another part of the country can understand why the South has a lower living standard than any other sections of the country, or offer any solutions that could possibly benefit the slow progress of the South.

In many instances, criticism of social and economic conditions has been extremely harsh, and when lack of sympathy impinges upon extreme sensitiveness it rarely produces harmony.

Whether the Southerner wishes it or not, the days of proud isolation are past, and outside help and suggestion are inevitable.

At the time that the AAA began its activity, many observers were agreed that the President was deliberate in choosing the cotton areas rather than the wheat district to limit the crops. Cotton acreage represents a sixth of our agricultural area, and the South is primarily a one-crop country. Cotton culture, unlike other agricultural industries, is still a primitive state in one respect, in that its picking is dependent upon hand labor which must necessarily be cheap because it is slow and uncertain.

Surveys made from time to time show that most cotton is raised on small farms by tenants and even on larger farms must be picked by a cheap labor often migratory, existing on an extremely low wage.

An entire section of the country including those manufacturers that may have come to these parts because of the cheap labor, is dependent upon this one crop interest. Crop limitation and government subsidy have meant temporary monetary aid to the South, but this is not all of the picture.

The TVA is another venture that has focused eyes upon the South. If the present plans for the TVA are perfected it will open up an entirely new industrial era for the South while at the same time offering a challenge to its accepted civilization.

Up to the present, invention has failed to make a cheap, practical cotton-picking machine. Millions of dollars have been spent for this purpose with doubtful success. Oliver Carlson, writing in The American Mercury, says that one has recently been invented by John and Mack Rust of Texas which after a trial of four years has been found satisfactory.

If, and when, this machine goes into general use, there will be a further dislocation of the social and economic life of the South. Cotton, picked quickly by machinery, will be of a better grade, and the tenant farmer and cheap hand laborer will join the ranks of the unemployed.

The aftermath of the War Between the States is still showing its ugly visage. The freeing of the slaves in the South without provision for them or recompense to plantation owners for losses in a cotton economy country produced the poverty and social maladjustments that are causing the entire country a great deal of concern.

A few weeks ago, Anne O'Hare McCormack, of The New York Times, commented upon the overwhelming problems found by FERA workers among the illiterate populace of the Southeast, suddenly confronted with a rapid change in their living conditions. The withdrawal of labor from marginal farms and the possession of actual cash in hand, small as it is, has bewildered the recipients.

The establishment of a minimum wage, even with the differentation, will no longer offer "better labor" conditions to the Eastern manufacturer despite the cheaper power promised by the TVA.

The widespread employment of women and children in the field aiding the tenant farmer will be eliminated by any cotton picking machine. A migration of farmers and labor to the North and the urban centers is inevitable, but that too, will cause a further dislocation of an older economy.

The problems of the South, of course, are primarily its own concern, but the fact that the South is accepting government subsidy makes Federal suggestion inevitable. Considering that the price of all labor is set by the lowest paid wage earner, and unemployment problems are the most pressing today, interference in the South from the outside has just begun.

Although the South has long accepted its social and economic peculiarities as inevitable, it can no longer remain blind to the serious condition its faces, nor try to turn back to established precedent. New precedents will have to be set, and unless the South wishes to subject its native assumptions to closer scrutiny, it must see to setting its house in order quickly.

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General

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Although the South has long accepted its social and economic peculiarities as inevitable, it can no longer remain blind to the serious condition its faces, nor try to turn back to established precedent. New precedents will have to be set, and unless the South wishes to subject its native assumptions to closer scrutiny, it must see to setting its house in order quickly.

## THE SENATE'S APPROVAL OF THE TENANT AID BILL

Senator Bankhead's bill providing for federal assistance to tenant farmers and share-croppers in the purchase of farms of their own has been passed by the Senate by a vote of 45 to 32. In the House, the fate of the bill is regarded as uncertain, but Senator Bankhead has claimed administration support of his measure, and it should have a good chance of passage in the lower branch of Congress.

The bill, as passed by the Senate, has been carefully amended to make the operation of the plan reasonably slow and prudent. It proposes to set up a corporation with an initial capitalization of $50,000,000 out of work-relief funds, and an eventual borrowing power of a billion dollars, with which to make government loans to farmers, farm tenants, share-croppers or farm laborers for the purchase of small farms. The loans would bear not more than 3 1-2 per cent interest, and the borrowers would have up to 60 years to repay them. Only the original capitalization could be used the first year, and not more than $300,000,000 of the billion-dollar fund in the first three years.

The cries of "regimentation" and "socialization" which its opponents have raised against the bill are not impressive, nor is their argument that it would injure the self-reliance of borrowers. On the contrary, it would encourage self-reliance and thrift. And the homstead laws of the last century, under which the government opened vast tracts of the public domain to settlers in the West, is an excellent precedent for this effort to help people acquire farms on their own.

It is to be hoped that the bill will be enacted at this session of Congress. The measure would be particularly helpful to the South, where the problem of farm tenancy is most serious. Every Southerner in Congress should support the bill. —Birmingham News.

# FARM PROSPERITY SEEN IN INDUSTRY'S NEEDS

BY FRANCIS P. GARVAN

President of the Chemical Foundation

THE Chemical Revolution, although now only in its beginnings, already makes possible a sharp upward revision in agricultural income.

If we achieve this we will have laid firm foundations for greater prosperity for the nation as a whole.

A major cause of the maladjustment giving rise to the depression was the fact that while productivity of agriculture has advanced steadily, markets for our agricultural products have steadily declined during 15 years.

And yet, regularly, we import more agricultural products, in dollar values, than we export. Among chief imports are silk, coffee, sugar, rubber and oilseed and forest products. In short, we import agricultural products chiefly for industrial use.

Meanwhile, we have a habit of thinking of our farms as existing merely to feed the nation. Someone has estimated that, properly operated, one-quarter of our farm land could produce enough food for all of us. Or, as an American farm leader stated it more conservatively, American agriculture can feed the American nation "with one hand."

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It follows that there can be no solution of the farm problem merely by increasing food production. One hundred and twenty-five million stomachs need only so many calories; and many of our foreign markets have either been lost or permanently lowered.

The solution must come through a new type of thinking—and new co-operation.

Farmers must use their "other hand" in production for industrial markets.

**Industry must learn what basic materials for manufacturing use can be obtained from crops now grown or which can be grown upon our farms.**

It was co-operation along these lines which was proposed at the recent Dearborn Conference of Agriculture, Industry and Science. The chemical industry—which, within two decades, has become the biggest of our industries—offers the aid of the great body of 20,000 chemists of America. Available also are the research facilities of chemical laboratories in which a total of $300,000,000 of private and public funds have been invested.

With teamwork of this type established and guided by a new point of view, it is even inevitable that the time is not far distant when millions of additional workers will be needed on our farms, and a thriving agricultural industry will again become a broad and stable foundation of national prosperity.

The new viewpoint, put forward by the chemist, is that agriculture in itself is "essentially a synthetic organic chemical industry, working with raw materials obtained from the atmosphere, using energy bountifully supplied by the sun, and employing only very small amounts of mineral catalysts from the soil." Whatever the crop, essentially it consists of carbohydrates, proteins and fats; and science now proposes to learn what uses can be made of these chemical products.

The first and most obvious answer is that from farm products an alcohol motor fuel can be made. We used 17,000,000,000 gallons of motor fuel in 1929. I am not, of course, proposing a substitution of alcohol for gasoline; but as an illustration of the fact that the farm market is not permanently limited, it may be noted that if agriculture did supply both the domestic food and motor fuel

Francis P. Garvan

markets our present agricultural production would have to be doubled.

**There will be many other new uses for farm products. Henry Ford for instance already uses half a bushel of soybeans in each motorcar he makes; they furnish him oil for paints and varnishes and plastic materials for window trim, panels, gearshift lever ball, etc.**

However, the new use most immediately and practically applicable is in alcohol-gasoline blends.

Habitually, and erroneously, thinking of our oil supply as limitless, we have been behind other nations in introduction of alcohol blended fuel. Twenty-two nations specify that only a blended fuel may be sold. They wish to conserve resources or reduce importation, and at the same time increase consumption of their own agricultural products. The same motives should actuate our consideration of this subject.

It is estimated that our known petroleum reserves are 10,000,000,000 barrels, while our use is at the rate of 800 to 1,000 million barrels yearly. Thus a 10 to 12 years' supply only is indicated. New fields may be opened up, but meanwhile our use will be increasing. Many believe that within a decade domestic supply will not meet domestic demand.

Diminishing supply will cause an inevitable increase in price.

**Since we can "grow" motor fuel upon our farms, the logic of the situation seems clear and inescapable; we should begin now the agricultural production of motor fuel and blend it with gasoline.**

A low grade gasoline, blended with 10 per cent of alcohol gives to the fuel "anti-knock" qualities comparable to the best gasoline. An increase to 20 per cent makes it comparable to the chemically treated motor fuels. For racing performance, in the air, on the track and on water, alcohol blends have been used in establishing world speed records of all kinds. Alcohol is not a substitute for gasoline—mechanical changes in our motorcars would be necessary if we attempted that; but it is already recognized as a proven ingredient of a superior fuel.

Those who have thought about such blends from the viewpoint of costs predicate their figuring upon present production costs of manufacturing alcohol. However, given mass demand—such as would come from a 10 per cent blend in general use—producers contend that they could reduce alcohol cost to 15c at the refinery within three years; and within five years they believe alcohol could be produced at 10 cents.

As a matter of fact, the vision of the chemist does not even stop there. Dr. William J. Hale, research consultant, contends that eventually the price of alcohol should "approach nothing, because of utilization of by-products.

The source of "the alcohol crop" will vary with the locality, the chief being corn, potatoes, sweet potatoes, sugar beet, cane, Jerusalem artichoke and wood. Using corn as an illustration, the chief products of the distilling process are:

**From one bushel of corn—17 pounds of alcohol, 16 pounds of carbon dioxide, to be processed into "dry ice;" 16 pounds of press-cake feed containing twice the percentage of protein found in raw corn. From other processes will come fertilizer and yet other by-products.**

Since the industrial revolution started we have been relying upon mining processes for our chief industrial materials. By that process you "use up your capital;" when resources are gone they are gone.

The Chemical Revolution will enable us to "grow" annually an ever-increasing number and volume of the necessary basic materials, returning always to the soil the necessary elements. We shall have mass production methods in scientific agriculture, a process which creates wealth, through an endless procession of crops which do not deplete our resources, which rob us of nothing.

Fundamentally we will be using, of course, chiefly the energies of the sun and air.

All that is needed is utilization of present chemical knowledge—and co-operation. Insofar as "growing motor fuel" is concerned, that already has started. Beginning cautiously, at a single service station, a distributor now sells "alcohol blend" in 500 stations, scattered over six middle west states. The expansion was in accord with demand. He estimates that country-wide use of a 10 per cent blend would create a new farm market of a value almost equal to our present farm export total.

My own conviction is this shift to blended motor fuel is inevitable. During the years of decline of petroleum production we shall be establishing the necessary plant capacity, and crop raising program, for alcohol production. We shall be developing also other chemical methods which will result in delivery of farm products to factory doors.

The Chemical Revolution makes all this inevitable. But we can hasten this next step in the evolution of our civilization by forethought and co-operation. We should do so, because it means greater and more soundly based prosperity for the American people as a whole.

Agriculture - 1935
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# 'Chemurgic' Farming Backed To Boost Agriculture's Profit

DEARBORN, Mich., May 7.—(AP) "Chemurgic" farming—the growth and initial processing of products other than food—was advocated at the Conference of Agriculture, Industry and Science here today as a means of bringing the farmer a larger share of the profits of agriculture.

A southern farming cycle, with pulpwood from southern slash pine taking its place alongside grains and vegetables, was described earlier in the day by Dr. Charles H. Herty, director of the Savannah pulp and paper laboratory.

**Declaration of Independence.**

The opening day's session of the two-day convention was marked by the signing by the 150 delegates of a "declaration of dependence upon the soil and of the right of self-maintenance." The ceremony was conducted beneath the portico of the reproduction of Independence Hall constructed here by Henry Ford.

The Chemical Foundation, sponsor of the meeting, chose Dearborn for the meeting to honor Ford for his work in "chemurgic" farming, a newly-coined term which was introduced at today's meeting.

An appeal by Louis Taber, of Columbus, Ohio, master of the National Grange, for farmers "to grow every plant and every product in the United States that can be grown here" was read to the delegates.

"The hour has come," Tabor said, "for us to recognize the unpleasant fact that temporarily the entire world has gone nationalistic." He declared that the "American farmer hopes this conference will set in motion influences that will do more for rural life than the politician has ever been able to accomplish."

At a meeting preceding the convention, Harper Sibley, president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, told a number of the delegates that the policy of the organization was to express a constructive difference of opinion with the policies of the government on the New Deal."

**"Chemurgic" Farming Explained.**

In explaining "chemurgic" farming, D. Howard Doane, of St. Louis, Mo., president of the Society of Farm Manufacturers, said "We must shorten the distance between pure production and ultimate consumption by farmers again assuming some of the elemental services and processes," and by "elimination of useless and wasteful and non-essential services that have wedged themselves between producers and consumers."

Francis P. Garvan, of New York, president of the Chemical Foundation, told the delegates that chemistry would free agriculture of what he termed the "parasites of big banking and the government," by enabling the farmer to become more than a producer of foodstuffs.

Fred W. Sargent, president of the Chicago & Northwestern railroad, suggested in a message read to the convention the following steps to assist the farmer:

A national land-utilization policy looking toward the retirement of marginal lands; a nation-wide policy of reforestation; a nation-wide policy of holding back surplus waters, in order to re-establish lake levels and build up the water table, and an intensive campaign to insure diversified use of the soil by developing new industrial uses for farm products.

**Herty Describes Work.**

Dr. Henry described the research which he declared had now made use of southern slash pine for paper and rayon cellulose as desirable as that from any other trees. He carried the vision of a new industry in the southern slash country further, however, by describing how farmers already had combined the fast growing pine with farm crops to produce an "ideal farming cycle."

Pointing out that today 70 per cent of newsprint requirements in this country and fully a million tons of "sulphite pulp" are imported each year, Dr. Herty said "the last half of last year saw the Canadian newsprint industry output increase 28 per cent—the United States industry 1 per cent. At this rate, one can see clearly the gradual elimination of the United States newsprint industry."

Dr. Herty described to the conference a 10-year farm program, with pines grown on cutover lands with farm crops between the rows, the cultivation of the crops simultaneously cultivating the trees.

"At the end of the fifth year," he said, "half of the trees may be sold for pulpwood. In the following four years, turpentining will proceed, producing a steady income. At the end of that period, the trees will all be cut and the portion not turpentined will be sold for pulpwood. Then will the cycle begin anew."

# FARMERS' WAY OUT SEEN IN NEW CROPS

## 'Chemurgic' Production of Industrial Raw Materials Urged at Dearborn Conference.

5-8-35

## AAA POLICY DRAWS FIRE

## But Agricultural Organization Leaders Say Curtailment Has Been Necessary.

By LOUIS STARK.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

DEARBORN, Mich., May 7.—In the presence of several hundred representatives of agriculture, science and industry, meeting beneath the tower of the reproduction of Independence Hall in Greenfield Village, there was proclaimed today a "declaration of dependence upon the soil and of the right of self maintenance."

Convened in a joint meeting which will continue tomorrow, leaders in the three fields from more than thirty States discussed how science might serve as the handmaiden of agriculture and industry thus to build up an economy of abundance.

The declaration adopted and signed was regarded as a challenge to the AAA curtailment program of the Department of Agriculture. As an alternative to the "philosophy of scarcity," it was proposed that commercial application be made at once to marketing a variety of surplus products of the soil which have been transformed through organic chemistry into raw materials usable in industry.

It is expected that before the meeting ends tomorrow there will be formed a council to coordinate existing scientific, agricultural and industrial groups in order to further the specific objects of the convention.

The two-day session was called at the direction of the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Grange, the National Agricultural Conference, the Chemical Foundation and a group of industrial leaders headed by Henry Ford and Irénée du Pont of the E. I. du Pont de Nemours Company.

**Ford and Son Hosts to Delegates.**

Mr. Ford and Edsel B. Ford were hosts to the delegates at a buffet luncheon, which was followed by a tour of the Edison Institute Museum and Greenfield Village.

Francis P. Garvan, president of the Chemical Foundation was host at a dinner this evening. The speakers were Mr. du Pont, Colonel Frank Knox, publisher of The Chicago Daily News, and Earl C. Smith, director of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

The new "declaration" read by Mr. Garvan to the humming of news reel cameras, asserted that the guarantees of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," as formulated in the Declaration of Independence were, "no longer sufficient; that "now, as part of the divine order of things man is inspired to re-emphasize as additional thereto the right of self-maintenance."

After discussing the causes that led up to the wide approval by certain groups of "the philosophy of scarcity," the declaration stated that the "alternative" to that philosophy was the immediate utilization of the discoveries of science as applied to agriculture. Then:

"Here lies a new frontier to conquer that challenges the genius of science, the courage of private industry and the productive capacity of agriculture."

The answer to the nation's economic distress was to be found in the new word "chemurgic," the application of chemistry to agriculture.

**Signed on Lincoln's Table.**

The tables and chairs used in the signing formalities were from Abraham Lincoln's Springfield office. They are from the collection of Mr. Ford. The ink stand was a duplicate of the one used in signing the Declaration of Independence and the desk was from the home of Thomas Jefferson. The Fordson High School Band gave a musical program.

Among those who signed the declaration were: Harper Sibley, president, and Henry I. Harriman, former president, respectively, of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States; Mr. du Pont, W. I. Westervelt, Sears, Roebuck & Co.; Howard E. Coffin, Southeastern Cottons, Inc.; Thomas H. Beck, Crowell Publishing Company; Robert C. Graham, Graham-Paige Motors; D. Howard Doane, American Society of Farm Manufacturers; Fred W. Sargent, president of the Chicago & North Western Railway Company; Charles H. Herty, pulp and paper laboratory, and Carl B. Fritsche.

L. J. Taber, master of the National Grange, said that while the economic crisis made it necessary to reduce surpluses and to curtail acreage "on much the same basis as used by the manufacturer," as a permanent policy, however, "the energy of the American farmer, and our fertile acres cry aloud for a prosperity of abundance rather than one of scarcity."

Scientists and industrial leaders, he said, could broaden the uses of products grown on the farms by finding new industrial uses for great basic crops, by finding new plants that can be grown here to replace imported products, by expanding the non-food uses of our present and potential agricultural production, and by developing additional production in America of raw materials for industry and commerce.

**Warns of International Currents.**

Mr. Taber suggested that the time had come "to recognize the unpleasant fact that, temporarily the entire world has gone nationalistic," and that while this country should do all it can to promote foreign trade, it should remember "that international currents, once in motion, are temporarily irresistible."

"Let us grow every plant and every product in the United States that can be grown here," he said.

Mr. Smith, the director of the American Farm Bureau Federation, said at the dinner this evening that if the conference succeeded in formulating tangible ways to absorb agricultural surpluses in the channels of industry on a basis profitable to the farmer the achievement would be invaluable.

Mr. Smith concurred with Mr. Taber in a defense of the control of surplus agricultural products differing with the direction taken in the slighting reference to crop curtailment in the "declaration."

The long efforts by farmers to control surpluses, according to Mr. Smith, merely embodied the principle long in use by American business to dispose of industrial surpluses in foreign markets at world price levels.

Mr. du Pont spoke of the profit motive as "the catalyst for accomplishment." He maintained that eliminating the catalyst is now the chief cause of the delay of complete recovery."

"The demagogue's hypocritical cry of 'divide the wealth,' if followed," said Mr. du Pont, "would take away incentive not only of future progress but also of further production so that there would be in the future continually less to divide."

# 10 Cents Per Gallon Auto Fuel Is Seen From Farm Products

DEARBORN, Mich., May 8.—(AP) Proposals to manufacture power alcohol from farm products precipitated a stormy debate today before the conference of science, industry and agriculture as experts disagreed sharply over its value as a motor fuel.

The Dearborn conference also took definite steps to make American agriculture a partner in modern industrial production.

Representatives of agriculture, industry and science approved unanimously a resolution introduced by Harper Sibley, president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, calling for the creation of a council which would become the co-ordinating agency in "developing new industrial markets for farm products." 5-9-35

The step calls for appointment of a committee of 15 to form a national organization to supervise the practical application in industry of numerous agricultural products which have been utilized experimentally in manufacturing processes.

The resolution was in line with a message to the conference from Henry Ford, who declared he was convinced that farm production of industrial supplies was both inevitable and essential.

"I believe we are on the track of a new partnership between farm and factory," Ford said. ". . . the result will be that agriculture will have constant employment, because a balance will have been reached."

Professor George Granger Brown, of Michigan University, branded blends of alcohol and gasoline as "impractical and uneconomical" and presented the conference a challenge from the American Petroleum Industries Committee, offering to pay half of the cost of tests of alcohol as a motor fuel if the Chemical Foundation, Inc., would pay the other half.

Francis P. Garvin, president of the Chemical Foundation, and chairman of the conference, retorted with the charge that the petroleum industry, "has not caught the spirit of this meeting," and that "Mr. Brown's report is a distinct disappointment to me."

Brown said in his address that it would be more economical for the public to buy the corn from which alcohol would be made and "burn it in the field."

Waving aside Brown's suggestion that the conference ask "disinterested experts" to conduct further tests of the alcohol as power fuel, Garvin said, "Where are we going to find disinterested persons"

At the conclusion of the session, Garvin was authorized to appoint a committee from the membership of the conference to investigate fully the possibilities of converting such farm products as corn, potatoes, artichokes and various other crops into alcohol for motor car consumption.

The discussion arose after Dr. L. M. Christensen, of Iowa State College, had described the research work done in producing anhydrous alcohol from plants, and had declared a blend of gasoline and alcohol constituted a "superior motor fuel."

"Alcohol alone is an excellent motor fuel in engines designed for its use," he said, while "the addition of 10 per cent of alcohol to average third-grade gasoline produces a fuel equal in anti-knock qualities to the present 'regular' grades. The addition of 20 per cent of alcohol gives a blend equivalent to present 'premium' grades of gasoline."

"Starting with the blends," he declared, "is as easy or easier with the blends than with gasoline of equal tendency toward vapor lock." Brown challenged Christensen's description of the fuel, declaring "starting becomes more difficult" especially in cold weather and that fuel consumption increases 3.2 per cent.

Both agreed that the petroleum supply would fail eventually, with Dr. Christensen offering alcohols as the eventual substitute, while Brown said 'other fuels will be found as the petroleum supply declines," predicting they would be more efficient than alcohol.

Dr. William J. Hale, Washington chemist who followed the two as a speaker on the subject of alcohols, said 'the organic chemical industry will ride to success over the body of the petroleum indusry." He predicted "nomadic" chemical plants of the future which would visit the farm and extract alcohol from farm products, leaving a residue high in fertilizing value.

"Give me an order," he said, "and in five years I will produce for you 5,000,000,000 gallons of alcohol, and at the end of that time will be selling it for 10 cents a gallon."

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# RUNWAY TO BE BUILT OF COTTON MATERIAL

Commercial Appeal

## Newark's Aerial Gateway to New York Makes Decision

11-19-35

## "ECONOMICAL AND TRONG'

Memphis, Tenn.

## Similar Project Begun at Riley Field, Fort McCellan, Ala.—Cotton Textile Institute Is Realizing Goal

NEW YORK, Nov. 18.—Port Newark Airport, Newark, N. J., aerial gateway to New York, will have one of the world's first "cotton runways," it was announced today by the Cotton Textile Institute.

The decision to use cotton fabric paving in one of the principal runways of this major airport was made by C. R. Andres, Newark City Engineer, with the approval of W. M. Aldous, chief construction engineer of the Bureau of Air Commerce in Washington, following conferences with C. K. Everett, manager of the Institute's New Uses Section.

### Begin Work in Spring

The runway, 200 by 700 feet, will require more than 15,000 square yards of a specially designed mesh fabric to be used as reinforcing membrane between a stabilized base and the asphalt surfacing. It is an adaptation, for runway purposes, of the cotton road principle now recognized by many highway engineers as a highly practicable and economical method of rural or secondary highway construction.

Because of extensive filling, grading and drainage work to be done, actual construction of the cotton runway at Newark will not get under way until early spring.

Work has already begun on grading for a cotton runway to be installed by the U. S. Engineers at Riley Field, Fort McClellan, Ala. Officials of the Chamber of Commerce at Anniston, Ala., plan a celebration in the late spring following completion of a portion of the project, the purpose being to permit celebration visitors to see both the finished project and the runway in process of construction.

### Reduces Costs

The Cotton Textile Institute has urged a wider use of cotton fabric membrane in rural and secondary roads as a means of minimizing the possibility of premature raveling, erosion, cracks and surface failure.

"Extensive experiments by several states have demonstrated that the cotton membrane assures a practically indestructible bond between surface and road base, making for greatly increased riding comfort and substantially reduced maintenance costs," the Institute said in its announcement of the Newark project.

"Cotton roads, and now cotton runways, quite aside from their practicability, offer a potential outlet for vast quantities of cotton—such construction absorbing the equivalent, in fabric, of from six to eight bales of cotton for each mile of 18-foot road or runway built."

## By The Way

New York scientists discover that cotton sheeting laid over the foundation of a roadbed insulates the surface, prevents water from seeping through and cracking the surface. Demonstrations over a period of seven or eight years prove the practicability of the use of cotton cloth, with the result that the Newark, N. J., airport is to be paved in that manner. It will provide a smooth surface permanently, with no danger of cracking from water or frost. Generous use of cotton for this kind of construction would result in consumption of 500,000 bales of cotton annually. Perhaps the north will manifest sufficient interest in this type of paving to find use for large quantities of southern cotton. Some day the south will manifest sufficient interest in the use of cotton to insist that it be used for bagging for cotton bales.

# $10,000,000 To Develop New Cotton Uses Urged; Plant-to-Prosper Goes On

Commercial Appeal
Memphis, Tenn.
12-12-35

## FARM FORUM HELD

### Agricultural Chiefs Hail Proposal of Speaker For Research Institute

### TARIFF SLASH DEMANDED; CROP PLAN TO CONTINUE

### Importance of Diversified Farming Stressed at Sessions

BY HARRY MARTIN

Great minds of southern agriculture put their heads together yesterday in The Commercial Appeal's first Mid-South Farm Forum with these results:

1. A $10,000,000 chemical research institute devoted to developing new uses for cotton was proposed by David L. Cohn, noted author. The proposal was greeted with enthusiasm by Dr. William J. Hale, of the Chemical Foundation, and taken under consideration by business and agricultural leaders of Memphis and its territory.

2. The southern planter was warned against chiseling on his tenants or the agricultural adjustment program by Oscar Johnston, AAA finance officer and Mississippi plantation manager. The planter was told by Cully A. Cobb, AAA cotton section chief, that the control program will continue if he wants it and will keep faith with it.

### Slash in Tariff Asked

3. Attention was riveted on downward revision of the tariff, Mr. Cohn advocating a coalition of south and midwest to achieve this goal, Mr. Cobb declaring that the tariff must end if the control program is halted.

4. Re-emphasizing the importance of diversified farming, John M. Graham, Georgia banker, said his bank makes no loans to farmers seen hauling hay home from town. T. Roy Reid, regional director of the Resettlement Administration, described diversification as a major factor in rehabilitation of distressed farmers. Chester Davis, AAA administrator, called attention to national benefits derived from the Plant-To-Prosper Competition.

5. Tri-State agricultural leaders unanimously voted to continue the Plant-To-Prosper Competition, broadening its scope in the coming year to include farmers of the generation to come.

Still another Forum speaker, J. C. Holton, Mississippi's commissioner of agriculture, pictured a changing viewpoint in his great cotton-producing state from the time when the farmer pointed with pride to his enormous cotton crop, paying little heed to his harvest of food and feed, to the present widespread practices of diversification.

Yesterday marked the culmination of the 1935 Plant-To-Prosper Competition. County and state winners, previously selected by their local judging committees, were honored guests in the Forum sessions at Ellis Auditorium during the day. At night they were again honored, this time with the first Plant-To-Prosper Dinner at the Peabody. It was there that they heard Cully Cobb, the AAA cotton director, and it was at the Forum sessions of the day that they listened intently to the other speakers, Graham Cohn, Holton and Reid in the morning, and Johnston and Dr. Hale in the afternoon.

They also heard at the morning Forum a special message from Chester Davis, AAA administrator, delivered on the NBC Farm and Home Hour and relayed through WMC to the Auditorium.

Commercial Appeal
12-12-35
Memphis, Tenn.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND
TIMES
NOV 4 1935

### A POINT OF VIEW
**On Technology**

HERE are some of the latest "marvels" for the destruction of labor:

A new device which will do all the hand-picking of cotton with machines and thus destroy employment for 4,000,000 cotton pickers. Perhaps 1000 people will be employed to make these machines, but 4,000,000 poor Negroes may be added to the relief rolls.

It is going to open up the great cotton growing country of Arizona and New Mexico where cotton can be grown cheaper and better, but what benefit will we get from cheaper cotton goods when people haven't any money with which to buy them because they have no jobs?

A new way of building ready-made "canned" homes in a factory so cheaply that everybody can own their own home, with little or no upkeep. But where are people going to earn money to buy these homes?

Chemistry is growing crops on trays in the kitchen, and raising sheep on synthetic food. The worshipers of science, invention, progress and civilization claim those thrown out of work find employment elsewhere. Where is this "elsewhere?"

Another name for this "elsewhere" is relief rolls. Thre are 11,500,000 suffering souls seeking jobs in this "elsewhere" today. There are 22,000,000 hungry mouths searching for food in this "elsewhere" today. (From a letter written by Harry Calkins, public relations counsel for international labor unions, and Frank Finney, New York advertising man.)

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Improvement of

# GA. STATE AGRICS WORK ON SOIL EROSION PROJECT

On Tuesday January 15th five senior "Ag." students reported to the soil erosion division of the department of the Interior at Athens, Georgia to begin its six months training course. These young men along with other students of the University of Georgia and Georgia Tech are being given special training in the conservation of farm lands in the state that are being washed away and destroyed.

The course will include work in Forestry, Soil, Field Crop, Farm, Engneering and publicity. At the conclusion of the course they will probably be employed as soil erosion Foreman of the U. S. Department of the interior, These young men were recommended to these positions by President B. F. Hubert of G. S. I. C. and P. H. Stone, director of Negro Extention work they are Roscoe Brown, Scriven, Georgia; Jonathan Horne, Boston, Georgia; David Grant, Ocillia, Georgia; John Powell, Cuthbert, Georgia; Wesley Myers Dawson, Georgia, they were accompanied to Athens by Prof. T. N. Roberts, teacher trainer for agricultural Education.

**INTENSE CULTIVATION**

SPARTA, GA., June 16.—(AP)—Pedro Wynn, negro farmer, raised $100 worth of vegetables and two bales of cotton in a single season on his one acre of land without the help of a horse or mule for plowing.

## *Legless Negro Boy Raises Wheat Crop*

Telegraph

SPARTA, Ga., June 1.—A Negro youth, born without legs, and who has traveled all over this section in a goat wagon until he is known as "The Goat Boy," has made a record wheat crop in the Springfield community, where he makes his home. Although not able to work in the crop, he supervised the clearing of the land and planting and harvesting of his 10 acres of wheat and kept an accurate record of the cost of production He harvested 150 bushels. The Negro has literally "worn out" numbers of goats, which he has driven to his wagon during his life of 18 years.

Macon, Ga., News
August 19, 1935

# FARMERS PLEDGED TO USE LEGUMES

### Eighteen Negroes to Plant Austrian Peas or Vetch to Improve Soil

Eighteen Negro farmers of Bibb and Lamar county pledged to plant from two to 15 acres of Austrian winter peas or vetch on their farms this winter after they saw the results other farmers obtained through the same program last year.

Pledges of the planting program were revealed today by S. H. Lee, Negro county agricultural agent of the two counties, who recently took a group of farmers to visit corn crops now maturing on land that was planted to these soil improvement crops last winter.

The tour took in farms in Lamar and Bibb cohnty, where corn was estimated to make 25 to 40 bushels.

**Four Weeks' Drought**

"On the Sugar Hill plantations in Lamar county," Lee reported," some fine cotton as well as corn were seen in spite of more than four weeks of dry weather. Last fall 4,400 pounds of vetch and winter peas were planted on that place and H. L. Smith, the superintendent, plans to plant 6,000 pounds this year.

"The best and most outstanding demonstration was observed on Henry Land's place in Bibb county. The drought has cut his production of corn, too, but he is still good for 40 bushels per acre on his Master Five-Acre demonstration grown in co-operation with the Georgia Railroad and State Extension service.

Those making the tour were: H E. Woodruff with the agricultural department of Georgia Railroad; Henry Land, Walter White, Robert Woolfolk, Isaiah Tharpe, Will Hatcher, John Gipson, James Peyton John Taylor and Moses Coley, of Bibb; H. L. Smith, Frank Taylor Elzie Wyche, Lilius Wyche, Sim Walker, John Flannagan, Jim Brady, Kelley and Robert O'Neal, of Lamar; Richard Walker, Robert Walker and Wesley Brady, of Upson Mary Binford, Baldwin, and Reuben Twiman, Twiggs county.

Augusta, Ga., Chronicle
August 30, 1935

## Hancock Negro Farmers Have Twelve Test Plots

**Sparta, Ga., Aug. 29**—Negro farmers of the Springfield section of Hancock county will have 12 test plots of Austrian winter peas this fall which will be sponsored by the agricultural department of the Georgia railroad. Eleven of the plots will be of two acres each and the master test plot will contain five acres.

Eight thousand pounds of basic slag and the seed has been furnished the Negro farmers by E. S. Center, Jr., general agricultural agent of the railroad and they are now preparing their lands for the winter cover crop, which will be planted soon.

The plots will be under the supervision of Clifford Tapley, Negro county agent and Zack T. Hubert, extension worker for the State College of Agriculture in this section of the county.

These Negroes made a fine record on Austrian peas last winter. They will be plowed under next spring and the land planted in corn

# BIG IMPROVEMENT NOTED IN GEORGIA IN STAPLE LENGTH

Constitution

## Experiment Station Says Grade of Lint Shows Decided Increase Over Eight-Year Period.

EXPERIMENT, Ga., Dec. 21.—(AP) Marked improvement in Georgia cotton staple lengths has been shown over an eight-year period, 1928-1935, inclusive, the Georgia Experiment Station announced today.

The station, of which Newton M. Penny is agent, co-operates in gathering vital statistics on grade and staple quality with the cotton grade and staple statistics section of the United States Department of Agriculture.

"This is the only means of measuring grade and staple quality," Penny said.

Figures derived are the result of classification of samples received from co-operating gins located so that a proportionate and even distribution of samples are classed each year.

The figures show:

The proportion of cotton shorter than 7-8 inch has been reduced 2 per cent (from 12 to 10); and 7-8 and 26-32 inch has been reduced 29 per cent (from 70 to 41).

There has been a corresponding increase of 9 per cent (from 14 to 23) in the proportion of 15-16 and 31-32 inch, and increase of 22 per cent (from 3 to 25) in proportion one inch and longer.

However, fluctuations have occurred from year to year in proportions of the various staple lengths, shorter than 7-8 having been as high as 29 per cent in 1929 and as low as 4 per cent in 1934.

A further analysis was prepared of staple lengths from the four soil areas of the state: the limestone valleys, Piedmont section, red lands of the upper coastal plains and the coastal plains.

This analysis shows:

Greatest improvement in staple length has been in the limestone valleys and Piedmont section, especially for cotton one inch and longer, which has increased from 5 per cent in 1928 to 29 per cent in 1935 and from 5 per cent in 1928 to 41 per cent in 1935 in each area, respectively.

The trend over the eight-year period of the study has been toward a lower proportion of cotton shorter than 15-16 inch and corresponding higher proportions of cotton 15-16 inch and longer, Penny said.

The agent said the large increase in proportion of one-inch and longer staple in these two areas was apparently caused by the organization and activities of one-variety cotton groups.

In a report issued at Athens by E. C. Westbrook, cotton specialist of the State College of Agriculture of the University of Georgia, it was shown that in 1935, a total of 108 communities in 52 counties in Georgia grew approximately 100,000 bales of long staple cotton, of the one-variety type.

The one-variety campaign began in Georgia in 1931 and has grown steadily since, Westbrook pointed out.

The long staple is much sought by Georgia textile mills, it is announced, many of them co-operating with the farmers in procuring seed. Gins that specialize in ginning the one-variety cotton are set up over the state, which enables farmers to keep their improved varieties mixed with the short staple seed.

# County Negroes Enrich Crops With Winter Peas

As part of a demonstration carried out in eight counties of Georgia, seven Bibb county Negroes have enriched their soil this year by turning under crops of Austrian winter peas. As a result, the crops planted this spring on that land have had no additional fertilizer.

The picture above shows a group of Bibb county Negroes inspecting the growth of winter peas on the fram of Henry Land with S. H. Lee, Negro county agricultural agent and P. H. Stone, state agent. Stone is at the extreme left and Lee is holding up a growth of vines.

Shortly after the photograph was made the growth was turned under and now the plot has been planted to corn.

The experiments are being carried on through the co-operation of the Georgia Railroad, the Tennessee Coal and Iron Railroad Company and the Nitragin Company of Milwaukee, Wis. Each demonstrator was furnished 400 pounds of basic slag per acre as fertilizer and 40 pounds of Austrian winter peas inoculated with the Nitragin. The peas were planted from Oct. 19 to Nov. 19 and were plowed under in April and May. The growing period was from 102 to 196 days but most of them had a growing period of 160 to 190 days.

**Greatest Yield**

J. H. Bonner of Wilkes county produced the greatest amount of green matter per acre to turn under with a total of 23,000 pounds per acre. The acerage production for Bibb county was 10,500 pounds but Henry Land on the Cochran short route and James Peyton, six miles out of the River road each had 17,000 pounds.

"By growing this crop," S. H. Lee, county agent explained, "the soil is improved by the humus that is turned under and the nitrogen accumulated in the roots of the plant aid the fertilization of a crop that follows this winter crop.

"In the spring when the crop was about ready to turn, we had a large group of farmers and business men visit the fields to see what had been accomplished. These plots are now planted to various crops and we will plan other tours to see the results of the program.

"Again this fall we expect to carry on similar tests with these and with other Negro farmers."

**Initial Program**

Similar tests have been carried out over a period of years with white farmers, but this year is the first that the offer has been open to Negro farmers.

Three of those trying the demonstration in Bibb county are agricultural club boys and the other four are adult farmers.

Besides those already mentioned, those carrying out the plan are: E. A. Stinson, Cochran short route produced 12,000 pounds of pea vine growth; John and Charles Moore, near Walden produced 11,000 pounds; G. H. Washington at Sofkee, produced 7,000 pounds; Anthony Hart near Rock Mill, 5,000 pounds, and F. M. Williams near Lizella, 4,500 pounds. The late planting of Williams was said to account partially for his smaller production.

Other counties where these demonstrations are in progress are: Baldwin, Coweta, Hancock, Jones, Tailaferro, Troup and Wilkes. There are five, six or seven plots in each county. Henry Land of Bibb has the only five acre demonstration; others are of one acre each.

Agriculture-1935
Improvement of.

Mississippi.

# Negro Befriended by FDR Forgets Politics for Plow

## Sylvester Harris, Back from Chicago After Having Helped Defeat Republican Representative DePriest, Busy Cultivating Farm President Saved

COLUMBUS, Miss., April 30.(AP) Sylvester Harris, Negro farmer whose telephone call to President Roosevelt asked help to "save my farm," brought quick results, is working these warm days and doing no talking about politics.

There is plenty of work to do on his little farm near here and as for talking he figures that his attorney is right in announcing that "when Sylvester talks he should get pay for it."

This decision was reached after the Negro farmer returned from Chicago where he said he received a "handsome" sum for platform electioneering for the Democratic ticket in a successful effort to defeat Representative Oscar DePriest, Negro Republican, who sought re-election.

Shortly after this Sylvester fattened a big turkey gobbler and sent the bird to President Roosevelt at Warm Sprigs, Ga., as a thanksgiving day gift.

That called for headlines because Sylvester had already become known as the Negro farmer in Mississippi whose farm had been saved by a telephone call to the White House.

His farm safe from foreclosure by a land bank loan and his wardrobe well stocked by suits given by Chicago friends, Sylvester is working five days a week cultivating his land, coming to "town" on Saturdays and "dressing up" on Sundays.

Cotton acreage reduction doesn't worry Harris for he and his faithful mule can cultivate enough acreage to raise sufficient of the white staple to keep up his payments to the land bank and clear a little in addition.

"This here land of mine can really raise the cotton," he proudly tells those who have asked him about his crop prospects.

But Sylvester is not putting all his faith in cotton. He will have sufficient feed for his mule and food for the needs of his own household. Sweet potatoes, field peas and a garden will see to that.

But there'll be no more politics—for a time at least.

## Mississippi Canning Company Employs 200

JACKSON, Miss.—Founded two years ago by S. D. Redmond, the Magnolia State Canning Company, which ships canned goods to every section of the country, has over two hundred employees, it was revealed here, last week.

## NEGRO FARMERS STUDY COTTON IMPROVEMENT

Negro farmers are still facing the problem of cooperation among themselves as a major part of the program of the Forrest County Cotton Improvement association.

The necessity of cooperative action of all cotton growers was brought to the attention of the negroes at a picnic last Satudray on the grounds of the Hattiesburg Compress company. The affair was sponsored by F. L. Mathews, president of the compress company.

More than 500 persons attended. The negro ounty agent, George Currie, served as master of ceremonies and spoke briefly. Edward Tademy spoke on better interracial relationship and cooperation.

County Agent E. E. Deen addressed the negroes on better farm methods and means of gardening the year around.

Will Batson and E. V. Coffield made short talks, thanking the compress company for musical entertainment and the barbecue.

## MISSISSIPPI PLANTER MID-SOUTH CHAMPION

### George P. Harris Taught Program To Tenants

### AWARDED GRAND PRIZE

### Montgomery Countian Praised For Execution Of "Live-At-Home" Principle And His Work Among Renters

BY EUGENE RUTLAND

A Mississippi landlord, who taught his seven negro tenant families how to "live at home" is the Mid-South's 1935 Plant-To-Prosper champion.

He is George P. Harris, Winona, Miss.

Undaunted by his failure to win the grand prize in 1934, Mr. Harris spread his own Plant-To-Prosper program to his tenants this year to march victorious through the competition in Montgomery County, his state and the Mid-South this year.

Selected by a count of two-to-one Mr. Harris takes his place alongside J. H. "Bud" Sanders, who defeated him last year to win the grand prize in 1934. Mr. Harris left no ground unturned in his efforts to become the Mid-South's Plant-To-Prosper champion this year.

**Honored at Dinner**

Mr. Harris was honored at the Plant-To-Prosper dinner last night at the Peabody and received The Commercial Appeal trophy presented by Col. James Hammond, publisher of The Commercial Appeal, and the $500 grand prize presented by R. B. Snowden, Jr., chairman of the agricultural committee of the Memphis Chamber of Commerce. The state prize of $200, given by The Commercial Appeal, was presented by Commissioner J. C. Holton, Jackson, Miss.

Judges, who selected the grand prize winner, praised his efforts highly, but also gave credit to the work of Clyde H. Williams, Nashville, Ark., Arkansas winner, and J. W. Harber, Dyersburg, Tenn., Tennessee winner.

"Competitors for the grand prize in the Plant-To-Prosper competition have set exemples that every farmer in the south would do well to emulate," said C. T. Ames, Holly Springs, Miss., one of the judges. "They adopted a 'live-at-home' program and have grown a diversity of crops they thought best suited their conditions.

"Mr. Harris has made good use of the government rented acres on a well terraced and productive farm. He has grown soil restorative crops in both summer and winter on a good part of his farm and has sold the products of beef cattle and retained the fertility on his farm. He is one of the tri-states' best farmers. He has done what every farmer should do—keep in close touch with his state experiment stations and the state and county extension forces."

Dean Dan T. Gray of Fayetteville, Ark., praised the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Williams because of the ability they have shown in building their soils and their home and their community.

Dean C. A. Willson, dean of the College of Agriculture, University of Tennessee, said: "Each of these winners has a right to be very proud of what they have accomplished. The Commercial Appeal, in turn, should be very proud of sponsoring a movement of this sort, which reveals the very best types of farming in the southern states."

Review of Mr. Harris' program in the Plant-To-Prosper competition shows that he got the most from his 600-acre farm without taking everything from it. In addition to keeping the fertility of the soil he spread his program to his tenants who will have more funds, food and feed, because of his participation in the competition and in the AAA's crop control program.

Faced with a larger expenditure than income, Mr. Harris was not making enough to replace his worn out farm implements before he entered the two programs.

**Teaches Tenants**

In addition to spreading the program among the seven tenants on his farm, he also took an active part in farm programs in his community. His sons, George and Gene, and his daughter, Susanne, and Mrs. Harris, also took a part in putting over the program at the Harris home and share the victory with Mr. Harris.

Mr. Harris took care to see that his farm is well drained; that sufficient feed and food for the family was planted and harvested. He added beef cattle to his program to increase the farm income, feeding them on hay and corn raised on his farm and charging the food to the cattle. He made a profit on his feed in that manner.

Thirty acres of land rented to the government were planted in corn and beans which were used to manufacture sweet feed for the stock. Hairy vetch was planted in this field during the fall of 1934. Ditches were dug about the field to keep it well drained. Cotton houses and old stumps were removed. He harvested 150 tons of corn and beans for winter feed.

An old feed lot was terraced and planted in rape which was food for the hogs during the spring. Bermuda was planted to make permanent hog pasture. Five acres were replanted in corn and Tokyo beans. This plot was terraced and as soon as the hogs eat out the corn and beans it will be planted in winter peas and rape for winter and spring grazing.

Two acres of good red land were terraced for black locusts to provide posts for farm use. Seven and one-half acres were planted to fall oats. Twenty-two tons were cut in the dough stage. This was used for spring food for the mules. Corn and beans were planted later and the corn produced 55 bushels an acre and 30 bushels of beans for seed were gathered.

North Carolina

Agriculture-1935

Improvement of.

Greensboro, N. C., News
November 18, 1935

# NEGRO FARM HOMES ARE BEING RENOVATED

**Vocational Teachers of State Have Centered Their Efforts Around Improving Property.**

S. B. Simmons, supervisor of vocational agriculture in the negro schools, stated yesterday that the program carried on in October by the 45 negro vocational agriculture teachers in the state had centered chiefly around the renovation of farm homes and buildings.

Many teachcers, he said, have succeeded in getting the farmers to invest a portion of the money made on this year's crops in improving their water supply, building new barns and putting in devices designed to make the work of the farmer and his wife less laborious.

He stated that one department has reached as high as 109 farmers in one community and estimated that by the time the part-time and evening class work has been organized the departmental average for the state will be 100.

By Thanksgiving, he said, every department will have had a fair or farm harvest exhibit, the major attractions of which are always the three-to-one corn contests.

He also reported that the farmers generally are benefitting from services given in the terracing of their land and in assisting in the preparation and sowing of small grain.

Agriculture - 1935
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South Carolina

Spartanburg S. C. Herald
August 20, 1935

# NEGRO PLANTERS PLAN SEED TRIP

## Bunch Leads Tour Tomorrow to Coker Farms, Many Plan to Attend

A delegation of negro farmers of Spartanburg county will go to the D. R. Coker seed farm near Hartsville in Darlington county tomorrow morning under the direction of W. C. Bunch, negro farm agent.

Bunch last night stated that the purpose of the trip will be to acquaint negro farmers of the county with improved seed and advanced methods of agriculture. He was particularly anxious to have a large group make the trip and asked that all interested get in touch with him today by 6 o'clock.

The party will leave Spartanburg tomorrow morning at 5:30 o'clock from John Woodward's on Howard street. Transportation will be arranged for those going.

Those already included on the list are John Woodward, city; A. E. Henderson, Inman; E. O. Bass, Inman; Berry C. Cunningham, Reidsville; J. C. Gist, Inman; J. B. Foster, Wellford; Paul Cunningham, Reidsville; William Hill, Pacolet, Albert Gist, Inman N. W. Walker, Woodruff; J. G. Ezell, Cherokee Spring; J. C. Brown, Spartanburg route 1; J. B. Walker, city; A. W. Webster, Cherokee Springs; J. C. Durham, Greer; J. F. Foster, Fairforest and Charlie Shelton, Cross Anchor.

Spartanburg, S. C., Herald
August 31, 1935

# NEGRO FARM TOUR TO BE ON MONDAY

## Improvements at Farms and Homes in County Will Be Inspected

The annual county negro farm tour will be held on Monday, Labor Day, it was announced yesterday by Agent W. C. Bunch.

The party will leave from the Dean street school ground on North Dean street at 10 o'clock and will inspect the improvements and demonstrations in home improvement field crops, live stock, gardens and yards at the following homes and farms:

John F. Foster, Fred Burgens, Albert Gist, J. G. Gist, R. A. Tinsley Charlie Bomar, Albert Pearson, J W. B. Rookard, James Bobo, C. H Rookard, Annie Rookard, Lee Mitchum, Gus Brodus.

Programs will be conducted at the home of Lee Mitchum and at Mount Pilgrim church in the Connor school community at 3 p. m. Addresses will be made by E. O. Bass of Inman, Prof. J. R. Ezell of Jonesville Georgia C. Talley and S. C. Disher, negro farm agent of Darlington. Those on the tour are asked to bring dinner, the agent said, and refreshments will be free.

Spartanburg, S. C. Journal
August 20, 1935

# Negro Farmers To Make Trip to Study Better Agriculture

Negro farmers of Spartanburg county are to go to the David R. Coker seed farm near Hartsville tomorrow morning under the direction of W. C. Bunch, negro farm agent, to acquaint themselves with improved seed and advanced methods of agriculture.

The party will leave Spartanburg tomorrow morning at 5:30 o'clock from John Woodward's on Howard street. Transportation will be arranged for those going.

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Tennessee.

# Lovedale Stock Farm, Saundersville, Tenn.

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—Industry and honesty make a combination that is not easily excelled, and neither is it permanently overcome. That is demonstrated in the life of Dr. J. W. Thomas of this city who for many years has at-

Plaindealer
1-15-35
Kansas City, Kansas

tracted attention because of his thrift and daring, and who has been an inspiration to many young people because of his astounding success. He is a man full of ideas and plans for going forward, and he is patient and persistent in putting his plans into operation.

He is a concrete illustration of whatdogged determination can do when let go. A natural born farmer he has built and kept going one of the most beautiful and productive stock farms in this part of the state. It is known as the Lovedale Farm at Saundersville, twenty-five miles east of Nashville, and is one of the beauty spots for people from far and near. Nowhere in the world will you find better cured ham than out on that farm. When Dr. Thomas gets through with a ham there is nothing more to do but to wish for one. Mrs. Thomas has been right by his side, cooperating with him in all of his endeavors.

The home is a charming place, made so by her queenly touch and hospitable attitude. The children—three in number—imbibe the same spirit of kindness and know how to make friends. They are J. W. Thomas, Jr., Miss Marie, and little Miss Thelma, who reported their vacation trip through the East last summer in

Besides being a successful farmer, Dr. Thomas owns and operates a chain of drug stores; and for more than twenty-five years has had unusual success in the drug business here in Nashville. Young Thomas is being trained in the same line of business and profession. The two daughters are still going to school and are admired for their brilliancy. They will make their marks in life, having before them the inspiring examples of their illustrious parents. The Thomas family live both in the city and in the country. They farm and carry on business. In their country home they have every modern convenience, and good cars make the twenty-five miles appear short.

One thing that is highly commendable in the Thomas family is that they love and support the church. Their home is the home of ministers, and they go out of their way to make it pleasant for them, as well as show their loyalty to the church.

LITTLE MISS THELMA THOMAS

Agriculture—1935
Improvement of

Virginia

CHARLOTTE, N. C.
NEWS

FEB 21 1935

**And Think of the Chittlin's!**

(Heathesville, Va., item, Smithfield Herald.)

News reaches here of the killing of a hog weighing 1,301 pounds in Gloucester county, Virginia, a few days ago. The porker was eighteen months old and the champion hog of this section. He is owned by Charles Bluford, a Negro farmer living near Cappahosic. The total dressed weight of the hog was 1,001 pounds. The head weighed 197 pounds and a single ham weighed 123 pounds. He was butchered the day he was 18 months old.

Alabama

Agriculture-1935

Labor Conditions

# ARKANSAS TENANTS IN SPOTLIGHT AGAIN

## Federal Relief Worker Arrested; Cotton Contract Probe Launched

JONESBORO, ARK., Jan. 19.—(AP)—Arrest of a Federal relief worker on charges of inflamatory activity and a Government inquiry into the handling of cotton acreage contracts today turned fresh spotlights on eastern Arkansas sharecropper problems described by State officials as dating from the end of the War Between the States.

Mrs. Mary Connor Myers, Agricultural Adjustment Administration attorney, who, as special assistant to the Attorney General, had a hand in the Al Capone income tax case, disclosed in Memphis that she had been sent into the area to make an investigation of reduction contracts.

She said that the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, sharecropper organization, active in eastern Arkansas—had complained to Secretary Wallace that "scores of tenants" were being evicted from cotton contract land in alleged violation of the Government crop control agreements.

Mrs. Myers came to eastern Arkansas following the arrest of Ward H. Rodgers, 24-year-old Vanderbilt University graduate and Federal Emergency Relief Administration school teacher, who was charged with inciting a meeting of tenants at Marked Tree, near here.

He was held at Jonesboro on $3,000 bond, but Farmers' Union attorneys today secured a habeas corpus hearing, and gained a reduction in bond to $2,000 on two felony charges of intimidation and conspiracy to usurp the Government. A hearing was arranged for Monday at Marked Tree on two other charges charges of anarchy and using profane and abusive language. Rodgers was unable to make the bond.

Local authorities charged he had referred to "mob action" at the tenants' meeting. Rodgers denied any intent to inflame the crowd, asserting he had merely pointed out that remedial measures were needed in the sharecropper problem.

# U. S. MAY TAKE HAND IN TENANT ARGUMENT

## Transcript of Cases Requested By Counsel

JONESBORO, Ark., Jan. 17.—The request that a federal investigation would be started soon into the reported ejection of sharecroppers from Poinsett County plantations was heard here today, following reports that Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace was interested in the case.

It also was reported that Jerome Frank, general counsel for the AAA, has requested a complete transcript of cases in which tenant farmers filed complaints and is preparing to investigate the charges contained in the original bill of complaint.

A majority of the sharecroppers making complaints are members of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union which was organized in July of 1934. The union is an organization of sharecroppers which was mushroomed into a membership of more than 3,000 in four states since its inception last summer. Its purpose, according to H. L. Mitchell, secretary, is to obtain for tenant farmers their rights expressed in Section 7 of the 1934-35 cotton acreage reduction contract.

The sharecroppers claim Section 7 protects them because it states the tenant farmers are to be allowed to remain. Plantation owners and local officials say this clause means only the total number of tenant farmers, not individual families.

Ward Rodgers, FERA instructor at Marked Tree, member of the Socialist party and executive board member of the union, was arrested at Marked Tree Tuesday afternoon on an anarchy charge and jailed here. It is alleged he told a gathering of 800 white and negro tenants that he "stood ready to lead a mob to lynch every farm owner and landowner in Poinsett County." He denies the charge.

## FERA WORKER ARRESTED

### Remarks at Sharecroppers' Meeting Lead to Charges

MARKED TREE, Ark., Jan. 15.—Ward Rogers, Little Rock FERA worker, whose home is in Texas and who has been here about 30 days as an instructor, was arrested this afternoon by Sheriff J. D. Dubard on information filed by Deputy Prosecutor Fred Stafford that Rogers made remarks in a public speech here this afternoon that "he stood ready to lead a mob to lynch every farm owner or land owner in Poinsett County."

The alleged remarks were made, the sheriff said, at a gathering of about 500 whites and negroes at a meeting of what is known as the Southern Sharecroppers' Union, which has been sponsored by J. O. Green of Trumann. Green also criticized the land owners, but kept within the law, as did H. L. Mitchell of Tyronza, who is secretary of the Socialist party in Arkansas.

## Cropper Owes $12 After Year's Toil

### By a Worker Sharecropper Correspondent

CHAMBERS COUNTY, Ala. — Listen, Chambers County is a good county for the speculators to live in and bad for the poor laboring people to live. You can get plenty of work to do for nothing. The poor people in this county sure lives hard, both white and Negro.

The landlord will take the sharecropper and work him all year around, and cheat him out of what he makes, and tell him that he has eaten it all up, when the landlord will not furnish them any thing but fatback meat and a little bread, and the most of it is corn bread.

A landlord worked a Negro tenant on his farm here for about $17 besides what he paid for the Guano. Part of the time he would not furnish him anything at all. When he gathered his crop he sold it and told the Negro that he got $39 and gave him only $12. He came backbold and law-defying in their practices the next morning, told him that he had made a mistake and said, "You owe me twelve dollars."

# SHERIFF'S MEN END FARM HAND UNREST

## Cut Off Propaganda To Call Workers From Jobs In This County

Working quietly but effectively, the sheriff's department has scotched insidious propaganda calculated to stir up unrest among the negro farm labor in certain parts of Montgomery County it was announced yesterday. Several day laborers who were persuaded to "strike" for higher wages have returned to their jobs and the trouble was believed by deputies to have blown over.

Literature advising wage farmers to demand $1 a day or quit work was distributed last week among negroes on the Mobile Road. The appeal is said to have caused five negroes to leave their jobs, but when they failed to receive any reward, either from the Government or the outside influences creating the trouble, they were glad to go back to their jobs.

The negroes were told to demand a mule instead of a steer from the Government; to oppose the principles of the agricultural adjustment program, and to raise as much cotton and other commodities as they pleased.

Not a single sharecropper is reported to have been enticed away from his crop, the "strikers" being confined to day laborers. The only trouble so far encountered in this county is reported to have been on or near the Mobile Road not far from the Lowndes County line.

One report to the officers was that a white man had been trying to inveigle the negro farm hands to quit their jobs, while other reports had it that representatives of their own race had been sent into this county to distribute the literature and advise with the farmers.

The deputies assigned to the case assured the negroes that no one connected with the Government was responsible for the great promises held out to them. Also, the officers reasoned with the laborers and promised them full protection if they would return to their work.

It was also announced yesterday that a lottery racket is being conducted among negroes of this city. The sheriff's office said the racket spread here from adjoining States and is known as the "number game." Solicitors are said to be

# Croppers Act To Spur Strike For $1 a Day

## Walkout Begins in Three Alabama Counties

### Relief Needed

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., May 15.—The Cotton Croppers strike, led by the Share Croppers Union is beginning to take effect on a number of plantations in Lowndes, Talapoosa and Chambers Counties, in the Alabama Black Belt. The strike has been delayed in other counties because of the season.

The main demand of the strikers is for one dollar for a ten-hour day. In Lowndes County a wage raise has been offered that would bring the pay to fifty cents, as compared with thirty-five cents last year.

The strikers need relief and call upon all organizations to rush funds to help the strike to Albert Jackson, Box 322, Montgomery, Ala.

Organizations and individuals are urged to wire F.E.R.A. Administrator Hopkins, demanding that relief be given to strikers.

Blaine Owen and John Summers have been arrested and jailed in Dallas County at a Share Croppers meeting. Fear is felt for their safety in this Black Belt County. Protests against the arrests should be wired to the sheriff and mayor of Selma, Alabama.

## ALABAMA WHITE WORKERS BEATEN FOR DEFENDING NEGRO RIGHTS

Crusader News Agency

MONTGOMERY, Ala. - (CNA) - For trying to better the conditions of the Negro sharecroppers of Alabama, two white workers, Johnson and Owens, are in acritical condition here. The men were arrested last Sunday when the full force of Sheriff Reynolds of Dallas County, augmented by deputized landlords, surrounded a sharecroppers cabin in which a meeting of the Share Croppers Union was in progress. 5-18-35 New York, N.Y.

Owens and Johnson were singled out for "special treatment" and taken to the jail in Selma where they were held until Sunday. As they left the jail they were kidnapped, driven 18 miles, savagely beaten and left on the highway to die. Owens and Johnson are active leaders of the International Labor Defense here.

- Sheriff Aids Thugs -

When the two prisoners were ordered to leave the jail, they noted that two cars standing outside the jail had their licenses carefully covered up with strips of cloth.

They refused to leave the jail unless assured of protection and the right to telephone their attorney. Their demands were refused and the sheriff and his deputies forced them out of the jail at the point of guns into the hands of the kidnap gang.

They were driven 15 miles and forced to alight on a plantation. The gang then stripped them of their clothing, tied them to a tree, with a heavy rope then horse-whipped them until blood ran. One of the members of the gang then stuck matches into the wounds causing excruciating pain.

The jailing and subsequent kidnapping, the landlords admit, is aimed at smashing the growing unity of Negro and white workers developing around the fight to free the Scottsboro boys and the economic demands of the impoverished Negro sharecroppers and tenants.

## Croppers Prepare For United Front Against Landlords

Daily Worker 7-11-35

MONTGOMERY, Ala., July 11.—The Share Croppers Union has received a letter from J. R. Butler, president of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, indicating that a united front of struggle for the immediate needs of the white and Negro farm toilers may be achieved in the near future. The increasing misery of the farming masses all over the South demands that the broadest united front possible be forged without delay, so the united struggle can begin in time for a cotton pickers strike that will rock the entire foundation of landlord rule in the South.

The Share Croppers Union is preparing a united front appeal to be sent to all farm workers' and farmers' organizations in the South. The propcsals for action will include the demand for $1 per hundred pounds for picking cotton, for the right of tenants and croppers to sell and store their own cotton, for a boycott of the Bankhead Gin Tax, for the right to organize, strike and picket, etc.

## Alabama Farmers Slashed Off Relief Under New Set-Up

Daily Worker 7-12-35

MONTGOMERY, Ala., July 11.—The Federal Resettlement Administration is getting under way here with the task of taking the farmers off the relief rolls. This is but a new name for the Rural Rehabilitation Corporation, which is despised and hated by the farmers now starving because of it.

R. K. Greene, labeled a "dirt" farmer by the press, is heading the new starvation set-up. Greene owns a 2,000-acre plantation in Hale County, entirely operated by tenants, and has never been mortgaged. As Rehabilitation chief, Greene bragged about his record of putting 5,666 farm families on farms at an average cost of $95.67 per family for food, feed, seed, fertilizer, clothing, equipment and work animals. Is it any wonder they are starving? Many farmers set out too late to get in a crop, some get a $7 food check every two weeks, regardless of family size, while others have been cut off entirely and are starving to death.

Administration costs and graft took so much of the appropriation that they were only able to care for 5,666 of the 20,000 families in need of help. Alibi-ing for this Greene declared his policy to be "crawl before you walk." The Share Croppers' Union says, "fight before you starve!"

## The Cotton Pickers Need One, United Union

By ALBERT JACKSON

Daily Worker 7-13-35

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — The united front appeal issued by the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the Alabama Farmers Union by the Share Croppers Union stressing mainly a united cotton pickers' strike has been rejected by the Southern Tenant Farmers Union while the Alabama Farmers Union has not answered yet. However, the answer of the S.T.F.U. does not mean that negotiations for the united front have ended. In his letter to the Sharecroppers Union, President Butler of the S.T.F.U. said:

"In so far as the matter of signing any papers dealing with a united front, I should not feel at liberty to do so without first getting the sense of the majority of our membership, and that would be a long drawn-out, tedious operation. I think Mitchell (secretary of the S.T.F.U.) feels about the same about that matter as I do."

It is the opinion that through an enlarged executive meeting of the S.T.F.U. the united front proposals could be endorsed, and it would not take long to get the proposals before the membership. The Sharecroppers Union adopted the proposals in the Executive Committee meeting and immediately issued the proposals to the entire membership and all toiling farmers in leaflet form.

**"Aims Practically Identical"**

President Butler went on to say that "neither of us want to appear in the role of dictator with the membership of the union. However, as you note in your letter, our aims are practically identical. I am sure that there is no difference in the two unions that should be fought over, and if you (the writer) have the opportunity of visiting Memphis, we shall be glad to see you at our office at any time."

Also, Butler points out that "as **to the pickers' strike, we are going ahead with preparations and expect to make it as effective as possible. I hope this will be satisfactory and that you will feel that we want to cooperate in every way possible."**

The significance of a united strike movement throughout the whole cotton belt has been underestimated by the leaders of the S.T.F.U. The farm toilers in one section look to see what is being done in other sections and take courage when they see that they are not the only ones who are struggling. The small cotton choppers' strike in Paris, Ark., was greeted with enthusiasm by the members of the S.C.U. However, the most important point is that united action in the whole cotton belt will force concessions from the landlords much quicker than a strike movement in one section of the belt.

**Amalgamation Needed**

While the united front must be achieved without further delay, at the same time **the question of amalgamation of the farm toilers' unions in the cotton fields** is on the order of the day. The S.T.F.U. has grown and consolidated with other unions in Texas and Oklahoma. The total membership is 15,000 according to a report in the Share Croppers Voice. The S.T.F.U. covers four states, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Missouri. The Share Croppers Union has passed the 11,000 mark and is organized in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana and the Carolinas. The large majority of the farm toilers are as yet unorganized, but in every new place the unions spread they are greeted with enthusiasm by the exploited and oppressed white and Negro farm toilers to win better conditions and to organize the masses of toilers in the cotton fields through **one powerful union** would be the greatest step forward.

In the meantime the Share Croppers Union will continue comradely cooperation with the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, urging an immediate united front on the basis of proposals already published, and driving forward in the unceasing

Agriculture – 1935
Labor Conditions

Alabama

# Lowndes Farm Hands Shot By Red Organizers

## Negroes Refusing To Join In Cotton Pickers' Strike Are Ambushed In Fields

## One Loyal Slain

## Alleged Leader Arrested; Bloodhounds Lose Trail Of Concealed Terrorist

Communism's invasion of Lowndes County cotton plantations last night had resulted in the death of one negro, the wounding of two others and the flailing of another, as well as the demoralization of an undetermined number of negro farm workers afraid to go into the fields in the face of cotton pickers' strike called by agitators.

The slain negro is Jim Press Meriwether, whom Sheriff Bob Woodruff said fired from ambush and wounded a negro woman working on the Bates's plantation when the woman refused to strike. Only a few of the birdshot struck the woman, the sheriff said.

Meriwether was captured by a posse near Sandy Ridge, the sheriff said, and while being returned to the highway along a county road, suddenly broke from the posse and leaped into a ditch. The negro, he said, had hidden a gun in the ditch at this point and when he arose with the gun in hand, he was riddled with shots from the four men who had him in custody. Sheriff Woodruff said five other shells were found in the ditch. The gun was a single-barrel gun and contained a loaded shell, he said.

Meanwhile, the hunt for a negro named Roper, who was believed to have fired from ambush and wounded Jim Lassick, employe on the Robert Herlong place, was being continued. Lassick was shot while picking peas after having been warned by Communist organizers that he would be killed if he went into the fields to work.

The sheriff said last night that insofar as he knew, complete order had been restored in the county and that the agitators had fled.

Those on the N. J. Bell plantation, it was reported, had been threatened with death by the "organizers" if they resumed cotton picking. The threats were delivered to their homes Tuesday night. The negroes were ordered by the Communists to demand $1 a hundred for picking cotton in lieu of the prevailing 40 cents a 100 being paid in Lowndes County, the sheriff said.

Only one arrest has been made, the sheriff said. The prisoner is Willie Witcher, who was arrested on the Bell plantation on a charge of resisting an officer.

Sheriff Woodruff discounted the usual rumors of three or four men having been killed in Lowndes County.

"Only one man has been killed, one has been wounded and one arrested," he said. "Everything is quiet and well in hand down here and we do not anticipate any further trouble."

The methods used by the Communists, under the guise of organizing "share cropper's unions" vary somewhat from those used in Tallapoosa County, which eventually resulted in several negroes making an armed stand against the officers, and the death of several negroes. The surviving members of the group who resisted officers were defended by attorneys of the International Labor Defense League, and all were convicted.

In Tallapoosa County the organizers called the negroes to a meeting. In Lowndes County they dealt with the individual families, concentrating their efforts first among the negroes on the N. J. Bell plantation. With the organizing also was some racketeering. The negroes were told to protest to Washington that they were being treated unfairly by the "white bosses", and it is reported that the organizers made quite a bit of money writing letters for the negroes at the rate of 10 cents a letter.

Once the organizers learned they could not create an organized rebellion or strike they sought to achieve their ends by threatening the farm hands with death if they continued to work.

It was reported that another negro, Jim Lassick, while picking peas on the Robert Herlong place, had also been shot from ambush by one of the Communist organizers. This report was verified last night by Warden J. K. Young, of State Prison No. 4, who took bloodhounds to the scene of the shooting. The dogs, he said, ran a trail for six or seven miles, then lost it.

"There had been so many people in there," the Warden said, "that the dogs couldn't carry the trail further."

Warden Young said Lassick had been warned by the organizers not to go to work yesterday morning and that he went to the field in defiance of the order. He was shot from ambush from a distance of about 30 yards. The would-be-assassin used bird shot which peppered his face, body and legs.

The Warden said he did not think Lassick was seriously hurt. He said he saw Lassick, sitting on the porch of his home yesterday afternoon, but did not talk to him.

Warden Young revealed that the organizers, in their efforts to intimidate and terrify negroes to achieve their ends, had ran afoul of Uncle Sam's law, by placing unmailed and mimeographed "Share Cropper's Union" propaganda in the mail boxes. Use of the mail boxes for any purposes other than mail is prohibited by law.

The "Share Cropper's Union" propaganda was distributed by two white men in an automobile, it was reported to Warden Young and placed in mail boxes in the vicinity of Calhoun and other sections.

Warden Young was of the opinion that the situation was still unsettled. The negroes, he said, were afraid to go into the fields to work. Many of them have quit, he said, and those who remain are afraid they will be "ambushed" if they return to the fields.

Gov. Graves, upon being advised of the disturbance, yesterday sent Potter Smith, chief of the State Highway Patrol, to Lowndes County to make an investigation of what had occurred and instructed him to make a report. Mr. Smith returned to Montgomery last night and will report the matter to the Governor this morning.

# MORE FARM STRIKE LITERATURE SPREAD

## Authorities Blame Communist Racketeers For Campaign In Lowndes County

Appeals to cotton pickers, wage hands and even relief workers to strike for higher wages continue to be made in Montgomery, Lowndes and other nearby counties, despite the recent drastic steps taken by delegated authorities to quell the spread of Communist doctrines and literature. The latest dodgers and pamphlets which were placed in mail boxes in Lowndes County and the southern part of Montgomery County bear the name of the "Share Croppers' Union," Post Office Box 322, Montgomery, Ala.

Blame for all the unrest and strife is laid at the feet of the Communists, city and county officers said. White strangers are believed to be spreading the literature and trying in other ways to incite and arouse both negroes and whites.

With the Federal, State, county, and city authorities cooperating in the hunt for the Communist organizers, officers said they were confident the agitators would be apprehended if they continued long in this vicinity. The literature was found this week in a number of mail boxes in Lowndes and Montgomery Counties.

Addressed to farm toilers, white and colored, the dodger said "We want higher wages now. We've had enough of starvation. The landlords made a billion dollars profit out of the AAA this year. Yet they want to go on paying starvation wages. Cotton pickers refuse to pick a boll of cotton for less than $1 per 100 pounds. Wage hands united with the cotton pickers and strike for $1 a day for 10 hours work, plus room and board or two meals and transportation. Refuse to scab on the cotton pickers. Relief workers refuse to take the cotton pickers job during the strike. Organize and strike at the same time for 20 cents an hour, 40 hours a week, on all relief jobs and for pay in cash."

The agitators implored their "strike committee" in every community to "line up all the toilers to strike when the landlord needs them most. March from plantation to plantation. Carry all the cotton fields on strike."

The literature, which has been so furtively distributed, makes mention of a strike fund, and the officers who are investigating said the organizers were not interested in raising any money except for themselves. This is a scheme, they claim, for extorting money from innocent people who may be misled into giving up their jobs and homes.

Plantation owners were referred to as "pot-bellied landlords who do not live on hoe-cakes and sow-belly." Small business men, small farmers and others "who suffer under landlord oppression" were urged to support the strike.

# Hunt Leaders Of Croppers In Alabama

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Sept. 15.—Landlord terrorism which has already taken a toll of four lives of militant leaders of the cotton choppers' and cotton pickers' strike in this state, spread to Montgomery today when local police launched a man-hunt for leaders of the Share Croppers Union, which is leading the strike.

Police photographs of all militant workers arrested in recent years in Birmingham and other cities are being circulated by local police who have approached trolley car employes in an attempt to enlist them as spies. The trolley car workers were asked to report immediately the appearance among their passengers of any of the photographed militants.

Meanwhile the strike is drawing in ever larger sections of the starving croppers. All efforts to force the croppers to return to the old scale of 35 cents a day have failed. They are standing solid on their demand for $1 a day or $1 for 100 pounds of cotton. Where the terror is especially severe, the strikers have taken to the swamps to escape the guns of the landlords and police who are attempting to force them back to work at the old rate.

The white croppers and small farmers are lining up behind the strike in an increasing measure. In many sections, white farm workers are 100 per cent behind the strike. In Reeltown, scene of bloody murders of Negro croppers in previous struggles, a former member of a strikebreaking lynch gang, has joined the strike ranks, and with other strikers, succeeded in flooding the town with strike call leaflets.

New York World Telegram

OCT 8

# Fleeing Cotton Strikers Tell of Flogging and 8 Slayings

## Negro Widow of Share Crop Union Leader Says She Was Stripped and Beaten with Ropes During "The Terror" in Alabama.

A woman who said she was the widow of an Alabama cotton-picking strike leader and two strikers who asserted they had fled through swamps from what they called "the terror" in Lowndes County, Alabama, brought to this city today charges that deputy sheriffs and plantation owners in that county have killed eight to fifteen members of the bi-racial Share Croppers' Union since August 19. All the three are Negroes.

The strikers were interviewed today in the offices of the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, 156 Fifth Ave.

Mrs. Anna May Merriweather, 27, widow of James, said he had been shot to death and she had been stripped to the skin and flogged twice. A bride of six months, member of a family of twelve, she started picking cotton at 7, she said, and, being a fast worker, has made as high as 68 to 70 cents for a day's work from dawn to dusk.

The men declared they used assumed names in hope of protecting themselves from vengeance when they return to Lowndes County.

"The first time I was beaten," said Mrs. Merriweather, "was at the home of my sister. They stripped me naked and a man beat me with a doubled rope four times. Then he put the rope around my neck and lifted me three feet from the floor."

James was shot when, returning to his cabin, he had sought to protect his wife, she said. The Merriweathers had been active in promoting the union and leading a strike for $1 a hundred pounds for pickers. The current rate, said Mrs. Merriweather, is 34 cents a hundred and the average day's picking 150 pounds.

Mrs. Merriweather thinks her family has taken to the swamps.

Wesley Smith, 50, and Henry Roberts, 28, said they never had made more than 60 cents a day although they worked from "can to can't see."

They are in the North for meetings to protest conditions in Alabama and raise funds for the strikers. A report today that the strike had been called off was news to the three.

Thomas Burke, assistant secretary of the union, reported the strike had been partly successful in parts of Alabama.

# New Deal Seems Cold to Share-Croppers' Pleas

## Delegates in Washington from Alabama Given Slight Encouragement.

## WIDOW OF SLAIN FARMHAND THERE

## Tells How Whites Killed Mate for Aiding Strike.

WASHINGTON — Representatives of Alabama share-croppers in Washington last week to appeal for Federal assistance in alleviating their reputedly woeful plight, received little encouragement from government officials, an interview indicated.

# Two Heroes in the Sharecroppers' Struggle

Joseph S. Gelders, white, former professor at the University of Alabama, and Mrs. Annie M. Merriwether, widow of a murdered victim of the virtual peonage system practiced by the landlords, who called on Federal officials last week for aid for these tenants in the South.

Accounts of beatings, murders, expulsion from towns and other atrocities imposed for their activity in organizing their fellow workers, were given by the group.

**Victim's Widow Present**

One of the group, which spent two days here en route to Alabama following several weeks' study of union organization work in New York, was Mrs. Annie Mae Meriwether, 27-year-old widow of a murdered farmer.

She told how her husband hunted by a poose for assisting Loundes County tenant farmers in their strike against a 35-cent-a-day wage, was shot down in his sister's cabin and hung to a rafter until he died, when he refused to divulge information concerning his fellow workers responsible for the strike.

The sheriff and his posse were said to have kept Meriwether alive for several hours, endeavoring to force him to talk, before hanging him. The names of the whites involved were given in a sworn affidavit by the widow.

**Discharged Professor Along**

Others in the delegation were Henry Roberts, Wesley Smith, both of whom were in the heart of the strike terrorism, and Joseph S. Gelders, white, said to have been forced to leave his position as a professor of physics at the University of Alabara because he took sides with the tenant farmers.

Two other white organizers, now being sought in Southern States for conviction under statutes similar to that used in the Herndon case, were also in the group.

One of these, alleged to have been discharged from the Columbia University faculty for assisting the students in an anti-war demonstration, said:

"I have been driven out of some places and bombed out of others. There is a price on my head now."

night.

The attacks on the Negro population were started by Punch Thompson, local white man, and his son who visited the vicinity of the Beulah Church, where the Women's Missionary Convention was sitting, and began beating several Negro pedestrians over the head. The sheriff, summoned by Thompson on the pretext that he had been "attacked," participated in the onslaught on the Negroes.

A Negro worker, describing the attacks, said the bosses here believe that every Negro hereabouts is a member of the Share Croppers' Union, which Alabama landlords and sheriffs have tried for years to break up, without success. He bitterly complained of the treatment of the Negro masses in Macon and Lee Counties: "We must work for wages of $8 to $10 a month to 'find' [feed] our families. Often we don't get even that, but find we worked for nothing. Also we can't get on jobs unless our old boss puts us on. All this in Macon County, near Booker Washington's [Tuskegee Institute] school."

# Negro Youth Is Victim Of Attack

## Alabama Sheriff Aided Mob's Assault on Negro People

NATASULGA, Ala., Nov. 19.—Ernest Moss, a Negro youth, is in the hospital here with a fractured skull following a series of attacks on Negro workers last Thursday

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# Sharecroppers' Union Grows Despite Terror

## Delegation to Washington Asks Statement from Roosevelt Condemning Murder of Six During Recent Cotton Pickers' Strike

By LEN DE CAUX
(By Federated Press)

WASHINGTON, Oct. 25. — Fugitives from lynch terror because they led in a strike for a few cents more for cotton picking, a delegation of Alabama sharecroppers poured their story to Washington yesterday.

They told of six of their number being murdered by landlord mobs. They even gave the names of many who had joined in the lynching, and challenged the authorities to prosecute them. They sought to see Postmaster-General Farley to tell him of the mail of striking sharecroppers being opened and withheld from them. To the relief administration they protested against cotton pickers having been forced to scab, on penalty of being thrown off relief.

Annie Mae Meriwether, young widow of a lynched strike leader told Federated Press of days and nights of horror when the landlords attempted to break the Negro cotton-pickers' resistance by violence and terror.

### Tells of Murder

Her husband, Jim Press Meriwether, was shot at about 11 in the morning as he entered his sister's home. He was allowed to suffer in the hands of the mob and subjected to third-degree questioning, until finally shortly before sundown he was strung up to a tree and riddled with a hundred bullets.

Mrs. Meriwether too was victimized by the landlord terrorists. Failing to get from her the information they demanded about the Sharecroppers Union, they ordered her to strip, stretched her out on a table and subjected her to two merciless beatings. Then they strung a rope around her neck, dragging her with it until she became unconscious. Mrs. Meriwether was finally able to escape to the woods and found her way to the hiding place of some other fugitive strikers in the swamps.

Two other members of the delegation, Henry Roberts and Wesley Smith, were Negro leaders of the sharecroppers strike in Lowndes county, Alabama. Both had been driven from the county with death threats over their heads.

### Three Found in Swamps

Smith Watkins, another union leader, was lynched, and Ed Bracy was later shot, as he tried to escape a raid on his home. Three unidentified bodies of Negro workers were found in the swamps around Fort Deposit, riddled with bullets.

"Justice cannot be had in Alabama in this case," the sharecropper delegates declared in a statement presented to the White House. 'High Sheriff Woodruff of Lowndes county was the leader of the lynch mob. Gov. Graves sent Kyle Young former high sheriff of Talapoosa county and leader of the lynch mob against the Talapoosa sharecroppers in 1931, with bloodhounds to Lowndes county to 'investigate' the terror. The investigation turned into a manhunt, with bloodhounds for the strike leaders."

Although driven underground by the terror, the Sharecroppers Union has grown greatly in membership since the calling of the strike. It now has some 1,100 members in Lowndes county, the delegates told Federated Press. Its meetings have to be held sometimes in woods or swamps; or in the guise of bible meetings, with minutes kept by underlining certain words in the bible.

Pres. Roosevelt and other high officials were asked by the delegation to issue a public condemnation of the Alabama lynch murders and the violations of the strikers' civil and constitutional rights. Federal prosecution of the members of the lynch mob, named by the delegation, was also sought.

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# BITTER COURT BATTLE WAGES BETWEEN OPPRESSED SHARE-CROPPERS AND FARM OWNERS

## LEADERS FORBIDDEN FREEDOM OF PUBLIC SPEECH, BEATEN BY THUGS AND ORDERED OUT OF SECTIONS OF COUNTRY

## Labor Organizations Rally To Support

By WILLIE OVERTON

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Feb. 14.—(ANP)—Up in northeast Arkansas, the "battle of the cotton patches," waged between white and colored oppressed sharecroppers on one side and plantation owners and law enforcement officers on the other, continues unabated.

The organizers of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union have carried to white and to black sharecroppers alike an appeal for unity and a description of their common problems that calls for united action against the plantation owners who have kept poor whites and Negroes in virtual peonage by binding them to the soil with debts.

Under the cotton acreage reduction program, a certain percentage of cotton acreage was taken out of production. The government agreed to pay the farmers for the loss. The government payments were supposed to be distributed equitably among owners and tenants alike. But the owners have been unwilling to turn loose this good government cash. As a result many sharecroppers have had no land to till and the owners have sought to evict them from the small cabins which they have for so long occupied.

The eviction orders of the landlords and their disposition to hog all the money created such a serious food-and-shelter problem for the sharecroppers that they were forced together and were easily induced to follow the union organizers who came in the wake of a visit of Norman Thomas, Socialist, last year.

A tense situation now prevails in most of the northeastern counties of the state. The organizers of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union have gone about their work in a business like but aggressive fashion. Their trump card has been to tie in both the white sharecroppers and the colored. In times past the plantation owners, if they so wished, have been able to array the poor whites against the Negroes, but in the present battle, the Negroes and poor whites are standing shoulder to shoulder for the common cause. With the aid of the union organizers, the attention of Washington has been turned on the plight of the sharecroppers and the treatment accorded them by the owners. An investigator from Washington has been on the ground for several weeks, assembling information on the methods employed by the owners. These owners are fearful that, as a result of the report this investigator is to make, the federal government will intervene to break up the entire system of spoils.

The leaders of the sharecroppers have been educated, young white men, some southerners, who have been ably backed by some of the Negro leaders, teachers and preachers. In an effort to destroy this leadership the plantation owners have enlisted the aid of the law enforcement agencies. Their efforts to this end have been easy because of the prevailing feeling in the south among the poor whites who fill positions as deputies and policemen that they must stay in good with the rich plantation owners. For years they have been used as tools by these rich whites to keep Negroes enslaved. Their job has now been made tougher because they find themselves forced to move against members of their own class, the poor whites.

Chief among those against whom the owners have directed their fire has been Ward Rodgers, young white southerner, a graduate of Vanderbilt university, and of the theological seminary of Boston university.

Whereas in real warfare, certain types of bullets and poison are barred because of their cruel effect, the plantation owners resort to the most diabolic forms of legal trickery in order to try to put Rodgers and his helpers in jail.

Just as Georgia resurrected a law passed before the Civil War which had never been used, to prosecute Angelo Herndon, so have these Arkansans and their political tools sought to resurrect old laws and to stretch others in order to lock Rodgers in jail.

Furthermore, in order to destroy the unity between the whites and the Negroes, the bugbears of "social equality," "communism" have been waved like red flags.

Rodgers was convicted of anarchy at Marked Tree three weeks ago, fined $500 and sentenced to six months in jail. He is now out on bond, pending an appeal of that case. During the trial he was condemned by the prosecutor because he called Negroes "Mister."

Since that time, members of the Socialist party between whom and the Communist party there has been no love lost during the last year, have flocked to the support of Rodgers. One of the principal men to come to his defense is Lucien Koch, the young president of Commonwealth college at Mena, Ark. On the job, observing what is taking place, has been Howard Kester, friend of Norman Thomas and representative of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Kester testified in behalf of the Costigan-Wagner anti-lynching bill at Washington last February.

Last week Rodgers and Koch sought to get their battered forces together. Although civil liberties are supposed to be guaranteed under the constitution, and although the union leaders have not lectured against state or federal government, they have been refused permission to hold meetings, indoors or outdoors.

Friday night, Koch and some friends attended a meeting of colored and white sharecroppers in a colored church. Thugs employed by the plantation owners who took Koch and a friend, Bob Reed, also white, from the meeting and beat them over the head with clubs and butts of pistols. Later they were turned over to a deputy sheriff who released them after holding them for several hours.

Saturday, Koch and Rodgers sought to assemble a group at Lepanto. Mayor Smith, storekeeper, justice and whatnot, refused a permit for a public gathering, and while Koch and Rodgers were standing before their followers trying to determine what they should do, deputies came, took them and two others into custody, and placed charges against them.

Monday, Koch and Rodgers were tried for blocking streets and alleys. Each was fined $50 and freed on $250 bond, pending appeal. It was then sought to try them for barratry, one of those cock-eyed laws designed to restrict lawyers who incite trouble to bring about lawsuits. Counsel for Rodgers and Koch made it so hot for the prosecution that these charges were dismissed Wednesday.

Tuesday at Wynne, four organizers for the union, two white and two colored, won a victory when the court ordered a directed verdict of acquittal after they had been tried for receiving money under false pretenses. The court stated that there was no evidence to show that such had been the case, but he warned the organizers that their kind of talk was not wanted in the country. The two Negro organizers were: R. T. Butler, a teacher, and the Rev. E. A. Brookins. Last November each of the four was fined $50 for obtaining money under false pretenses in the solicitation of initiation fees and dues for the union.

New York Evening Post

FEB 14 1935

# SOUTHERN SERFS GAINING GROUND AGAINST PLANTERS

## Court Victories Give Sharecroppers Encouragement in Fight for Rights

## CENTER OF ARKANSAS ROW IS TEACHER OF THE POOR

By HOWARD KESTEN

*Special Correspondent N. Y. Post*

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Feb. 1[illegible].—Comparative quiet settled over Northeastern Arkansas today as the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union carried forward its struggle for freedom of speech, assemblage and the right to organize share-croppers.

During a week of violence in which union organizers were beaten, mobbed and falsely arrested, the union carried its message to interested groups of farmers, day laborers and share-croppers throughout this section. The conflict has not only aroused widespread interest throughout the cotton States, but has received the attention of Washington.

The recent victory of the union in the Circuit Court of Cross County, Ark., where four farmers were on trial for union activities, has produced widespread enthusiasm from the share-croppers. The victory was shortly followed by a second triumph when two organizers charged with disturbing the peace were acquitted in Lapanto, Ark.

### Sympathizers Beaten

For months the union has been struggling against the united efforts of planters to destroy it. Share-croppers and day laborers have been evicted. Organizers and union sympathizers have been beaten and mobbed.

The central figure on this struggle between exploited and disinherited share-croppers and powerful landlords and planters is Ward H. Rodgers, union leader.

Rodgers, formerly a teacher in the workers' education department of the FERA, is a native of Texas. He is a graduate of Vanderbilt University School of Religion and Boston University. For a time he was pastor of two small Methodist churches in Western Arkansas. Before becoming a teacher for the FERA he worked as an organizer for the Tenant Farmers' Union.

While engaged in this work he incurred the enmity of the planters. Of a quiet, unassuming, sensitive nature, Rodgers was deply stirred by the human wreckage he saw about him, which he attributed to the vicious plantation system of the South and the cotton production program of the AAA.

### *Taught Share-Croppers to Read and Write*

Living in share-croppers' homes, eating their miserable food, seeing them go without sufficient clothing, hearing their stories of robbery by their landlords, Rodgers threw himself into their struggles. He taught scores to read and write, helped

# Arkansas Vigilantes Threaten Life of Commonwealth College

Daily Worker 2-28-35

## Widespread Terrorism Follows Attack on Tenant Farmers

**The following account is an excerpt from the story of the recent Arkansas raids by vigilantes and landlords against the Tenant Farmers' Union. Written by Lucien Koch, the account tells of the arrest of Bob Reed and Atley Delaney of Commonwealth College.**

**The arrest of these three organizers of Commonwealth College emphasizes the current campaign of terrorism which the Arkansas landlords and their henchmen are organizing against the school. Situated in Mena, Arkansas, this school has been operating as "a non-factional workers' co-operative college" for the training of working class organizers. Recently a united front of Communists and Socialists on the school grounds was organized to combat the Arkansas terrorism and fight for the tenant farmers.**

**The menace against the school is a forerunner of the growing menace of terrorism against all working class schools in the country. It is urged that telegrams and messages be sent at once to the Arkansas State Legislature at Little Rock, where a resolution has been introduced to outlaw the school. Educational groups and institutions are especially urged to send their immediate protests.**

DELANEY was assigned to watch over Marked Tree meeting; Rodgers was sent to Truman and Bob and I went to a meeting in Gilmore. The Gilmore meeting represented the first attempt to break into Crittenden. The county officials were noted for their brutality.

The meeting was arranged in a church-house by a Negro organizer (one of the outstanding, courageous Negro leaders. Names must be omitted. Two double-barrelled shotguns and a revolver are in his room. He is ready to lay down his life if the Negroes and whites remain united).

Bob and I and a share-cropper and his wife from Marked Tree arrived at the church house about 7:30. Over 200 people had crowded into the building, mostly Negroes, but a few whites, planters, their agents, etc. High tension was in the air. After the Negro leader opened the meeting, I started speaking.

When the talk was two-thirds through, a plantation riding-boss (Jake Lewis, by name) clogged up to the speaking platform, white as a sheet, drunk, swaggering, revolvers sticking out of his belt.

"What are you talking about?" he sneered. I answered, "The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union."

They invited him to take a seat, assuring him there would be a question period later. He didn't stay, didn't succeed in breaking up the meeting, which was his purpose, although a few whites and blacks walked out. Some of those present were his own slaves. They feared his retaliation. . . .

* * *

FIVE men filed into the room, walked toward me, headed by the riding boss. They ordered me to "come along." I refused. They brandished their revolvers, dragged me from the seat, and kicked me from the room. One Negro had a gun in a brief-case but couldn't get to it. . . .

I was hustled to a car on the road. Bob was too loyal to see me go alone. He came out to inquire where they were taking me. They started beating him and forced him into the car wtih me. Moore and Lewis whirled their weapons, fingers on trigger. They poked guns into our faces and bellies, they kicked us, punched us—Bob's presence dividing the blows. We were both bloody about the face and head. Bob had a barrel wound on the cheek, I on the scalp.

The car was moved down the road about a quarter of a mile and stopped. Rough treatment started again. Drunk deputies stood around and allowed it to go on.

Two new deputies appeared on the scene and drove us to Marion, the gangsters following. We crouched in our seats to keep the lights of following cars from striking us. Once at Marion, we were taken to the sheriff's office. A group questioned us.

We were taken to the basement where we were allowed to wash. We were taken to an attorney's office. He questioned us all the time, stressing the matter of race equality. The sheriff told us he was letting us go without preferring charges. We were escorted by two deputies to our car, parked by the church house and from there to the Poinsett County line.

Before driving off, we entered the church to look for my overcoat and Bob's jumper. Both were gone. We noticed a pool of blood on the floor. We discovered later our anxiety over the blood was unfounded. One of the deputies pointed out a lynch rope bunched in the corner of the room, which he said was meant for us.

**This is the family of a typical southern sharecropper cotton farmer. The woman's clothing is made up of patches from men's clothing. The farmer cannot even buy cotton shirts for his children. However, because there is no market for cotton, six acres of their crop was plowed under. It is conditions such as these that are being fought throughout the south with especial militancy by the Sharecroppers Unions in Alabama and the Tenant Farmers Union in Arkansas.**

them make out complaints against their landlords and the relief agencies, and tried to teach them something about the world.

On January 15 2,000 share-croppers met in the little town of Marked Tree, Ark., to hear the report of a delegation which the union had sent to Washington to present the share-croppers' grievances to Secretary Wallace. Rodgers presided at this meeting.

### Threatened With Lynching

He referred to a threat against him by a committee which had visited him during one of his class periods. He was told by R. A. Lynch, a member of the committee, that he would be "Ku Kluxed and lynched" if he didn't stop teaching. Rodgers had been teaching Negro and white workers and had been using courses prescribed by the Workers' Education Bureau for that purpose.

While trying to impress upon officials of Marked Tree and Poinsett County the seriousness of the situation, Rodgers remarked that he, too, could lead a mob to lynch certain planters in Poinsett County, but that he had no intention of doing so since the union used peaceable and lawful methods.

"The planters," according to a resident of the county, "became alarmed at this meeting. They saw in this organization a threat to the iniquitous but lucrative system of tenantry, semi-slavery and peonage from which they derive economic power and political domination over the lives of these helpless people.

"The planters had enlisted the aid of Sheriff J. D. Dubard, himself a planter, and the prosecuting attorney, Fred H. Stafford, in their effort to crush the union. These officials and their aids gathered on the fringe of the crowd waiting for an excuse to arrest the speakers and thereby strike a serious blow at the union."

## *Tried in Back Room of Grocery Store*

Immediately after Rodgers concluded his speech he was arrested on four charges including "anarchy, conspiracy to usurp the Government, using profane and abusive language and inciting a mob."

After three days in Jonesboro jail a habeas corpus hearing lowered the bail from $3,000 to $2,000, a sum he was unable to raise immediately.

In the back room of a grocery store at Marked Tree the trial for "anarchy" was held.

The store was crowded with share-croppers and planters. The sheriff impaneled a jury, packing it with planters. Among them were seven men who formerly had been plantation owners in Mississippi. One or two were deputy sheriffs.

### Gets Six Months in Jail

A competent observer said that "nine of the jurors would have convicted Rodgers for treason, murder or rape if such charges had been made."

Rodgers was fined $500 and sentenced to six months in jail. An appeal will come before the Circuit Court of Poinsett County at its March term.

Following the arrest of Rodgers a reign of terror was inaugurated by the planters in an effort to destroy the union. Members of the union were coerced and intimidated. Hundreds served with eviction notices. Those who sought to organize share-croppers were mobbed.

Lucien Koch, director of Commonwealth, and Robert Reed, a student, were mobbed by planters and deputies as they attempted to address a meeting of Negro share-croppers in a Negro church at Gilmore, Ark. Both men were seriously injured and medical attention was given Reed in a Memphis hospital.

### Arrested Again

On February 2, following a large mass meeting at Marked Tree, Rodgers, who had been released on bond; Koch, Atley Delaney and Robert Baker were arrested in Lepanto when they attempted to speak on the streets.

In the Mayor's Court on February 4 Koch and Rodgers were fined $50 for "obstructing traffic." The Mayor sought to impose a six-month jail sentence but was told that the offence did not allow a jail sentence.

## *Acreage Reduction Cuts Workers' Share*

The Arkansas labor laws define the share-cropper as one who receives as wage a certain portion of the proceeds of his crop. He is a wage worker without wages. The planter furnishes the share-cropper with groceries and some clothes during the growing season, beginning March 1, ending in July.

The amount the share-cropper receives depends on the acreage worked. Usually 50 cents to 75 cents an acre per month. The average size crop of cotton is ten to eighteen acres. Since the reduction of acreage his "furnish" has been cut in in proportion.

H. L. Mitchell, a share cropper, is the militant leader of the aroused share-croppers.

The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union has been represented in the courts by C. T. Carpenter of Marked Tree. More than twenty years ago Carpenter prosecuted cases of peonage in Arkansas and has fought for rights of organized labor on several occasions.

Although a temporary lull has come to this strife-torn area there is bitter resentment among the share-croppers and their friends against their oppressors. With almost intolerable burdens, these people are standing solidly for the union, which is the only protection they have.

Agriculture-1935
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas.

# Sharecroppers Seek Gov. Futrell's Aid

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Feb. 8.—(AP)—Ward H. Rodgers, storm center of the east Arkansas sharecropper controversy, today revealed plans to make a personal appeal to Governor J. M. Futrell, of Arkansas, for aid in the establishment of a "tented city" in Poinsett county to house 100 families he claims have been evicted from plantations.

Rodgers' proposal was immediately pronounced "absurd" by Fred H. Stafford, deputy prosecuting attorney for Poinsett county, and the Rev. J. Abner Sage, a Methodist minister at Marked Tree, describing Rodgers as "a young fanatic," said there was no evidence of any "wholesale evictions" in Poinsett county.

# 'Tented City' For East Arkansas Is Proposed

MEMPHIS, TENN., Feb. 8.—(AP)—Ward H. Rodgers, storm center of the East Arkansas sharecropper controversy, today revealed plans to make a personal appeal to Gov. J. M. Futrell, of Arkansas for aid in the establishment of a "tented city" in Poinsett County to house 100 families he claims have been evicted from plantations.

Rodgers's proposal was immediately pronounced "absurd" by Fred H. Stafford, deputy prosecuting attorney for Poinsett County, and the Rev. J. Abner Sage, a Methodist minister at Marked Tree, describing Rodgers as "a young fanatic," said there was no evidence of any "wholesale evictions" in Poinsett County.

Informed at Little Rock of Rodgers's plan to call on him either Saturday or Monday, Gov. Futrell had no comment to make before leaving for Benton, Ark. It was not announced when he would return to his office, earlier in the morning, he had "nothing to say" concerning the agitation in the northeastern part of the State.

# Jury Named For Communist Trial

## Farm Relief Worker And College Head Already Fined On One Charge

LEPANTO, ARK., Feb. 4.—(AP)—Frequent clashes between opposing attorneys marked the opening here late today of the barratry trial of Ward H. Rodgers after he and Lucien Koch, director of Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark., had been fined $50 each on a city charge of obstructing the streets and alleys of Lepanto.

"I propose to show," said acting City Atty. J. S. Mosby, "that Rodgers is communistic in nature, and that his proposals are those of the communistic party, which has headquarters in Russia."

Mosby made this statement in outlining the State's case to the hastily selected jury. He was followed by Defense Atty. C. T. Carpenter, of Marked Tree, who told the jury:

"I'd be willing to wager that Mosby doesn't know the definition of communism. I'm going to ask him the meaning before this trial is over. It is unfair to wave the 'red flag' in this case."

Atley Delany, 22, a Commonwealth student, and Robert Baker, 32, a former FERA laborer, who were arrested Saturday night along with Rodgers and Koch at the opening of a sharecropper rally by the Southern Tenant Farmers Union of which Rodgers is an organizer, were discharged by Mayor M. H. Smith, before whom the case is being tried, when no charges were presented in court against them.

The barratry trial of Rodgers was adjourned until Wednesday morning after two witnesses had taken the stand. Koch's trial will follow that of Rodgers.

The barratry charge was read by Mosby as follows:

"A barrator is one who incites or maintains suits and quarrels, whether in the courts or elsewhere in the country; a disturber of the peace who spreads false rumors and calumnies whereby discord and disquiet may grow among neighbors."

Defense Atty. Carpenter argued that the statute was applicable to lawyers, but Mosby said the State Supreme Court had held it could be applied to others.

Saturday's arrests followed many clashes between east Arkansas officers and organizers for the union, whose pleas to Washington brought Mrs. Mary Conner Myers, Agricultural Adjustment Administration attorney, into the section to investigate complaints that planters were withholding parity payments from sharecroppers and evicting the tenants in large numbers.

The tenant system in the South dates back to the close of the War Between the States. Planters provide the land, housing, clothing and food while the sharecropper makes the crop, which they divide at the end of the year after the planter has deducted the cost of supplies obtained at the plantation store.

# PASTOR SAYS TENANT PLIGHT OVERDRAWN

## Minister Reports No Wholesale Evictions

## SPEAKS FOR POINSETT

### Sharecroppers' Organizers, in Memphis, Ignored by Futrell on Plan for Concentration Camp

Describing Ward H. Rodgers, Socialist and Southern Tenant Farmers' Union leader, as a "young fanatic," the Rev. J. Abner Sage, Methodist minister at Marked Tree, Ark., yesterday declared sharecropper conditions were much better than pictured by union agitators.

"There have been no wholesale evictions in Poinsett County as Rodgers and his friends claim," Mr. Sage said. "It is true, however, that many families have been hard pressed to make ends meet.

"However, the majority of those seen on the roads and highways are merely moving from one locality to another as they always do between seasons. Many of them who contend they have no place to go are merely shiftless."

**Drunkenness, Not Union**

Mr. Sage added that he knew of one tenant who had been evicted for excessive drinking.

"This man later joined the union and declared up and down the country he had been put off a plantation merely because of his union affiliations."

Meanwhile, Rodgers and H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the union, were in Memphis yesterday where they enlarged on plans to establish a "tented city" to take care of the hundred or more Poinsett families they claim have been evicted illegally.

Rodgers has asked the aid of Governor Futrell at Little Rock in furtherance of his scheme, but the governor yesterday declined to make any comment regarding the situation.

AAA officials at Washington, who sent Mrs. Mary Conner Myers here to investigate alleged abuses of tenants, indicated that it would be several weeks before her report of conditions and recommendations would be made public.

# CHARGES DROPPED IN ARKANSAS CASE

## Two Organizers Freed As State Watches AAA Shakeup In Washington

LEPANTO, ARK., Feb. 6.—(AP)—East Arkansas officers dropped barratry charges against two young organizers for the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union here today, but interest in developments in this State was overshadowed by news of the shakeup in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration at Washington.

Both the planters and officers, on the one hand, and sharecropper organizers on the other, are awaiting with interest a report from Mrs. Mary Conner Myers, AAA attorney, who conducted an investigation recently into complaints that planters had violated acreage reduction contracts with respects to the rights of sharecroppers.

Dispatches from Washington late today said that Mrs. Myers was not involved in the reorganization of the AAA, and that her report will be submitted directly to Secretary of Agriculture Wallace. Whatever opinion is expressed with respect to the trying situation here as a result of prolonged controversy between the union and the planters is expected to come from Secretary Wallace's office.

The barratry charge—that of spreading "false rumors and calumnies whereby discord and disquiet may grow among neighbors"—filed against Ward H. Rodgers, discharged Federal Emergency Relief Administration instructor, and Lucien Koch, director of Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark., was dismissed today on recommendation of the prosecution.

Mayor M. P. Smith, before whom the cases were presented, said "we don't anticipate any more trouble around Lepanto." Mayor Smith fined the men $50 each Saturday on city charges of obstructing the streets and alleys at a rally at Lepanto recently.

The dismissal immediately freed Koch, who is at liberty under $250 bond pending his appeal from the city fine. Rodgers was freed early tonight on two bonds totaling $1,250. After the dismissal of the barratry charge, Rodgers had been taken back into custody as a result of the withdrawal of two signers of the $1,000 bond he made following his conviction at Marked Tree recently of a charge of anarchy growing out of an alleged inflammatory address to sharecroppers there. Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Hall, of Lepanto went to Harrisburg and made the new bonds.

Two white and two negroes won directed verdicts of acquittal at Wynne yesterday where they were tried on charges of obtaining money by false pretenses in the solicitation of members for the union.

# *Union Organizers Freed On Appeal*

WYNNE, ARK., Feb. 5—(AP)—The Southern tenant farmers union won its first victory with East Arkansas officers today when four union organizers were given directed verdicts of acquittal in circuit court on their appeals from magistrate court fines.

The four, L. M. Mills and W. H. Stultz, both white, and two negroes, R. T. Butler and A. B. Brookins, were fined $50 each in a magistrate's court last November on charges of obtaining money by false pretenses in the solicitation of initiation fees and dues for membership in the union of sharecroppers.

The state charged that the union was not a corporation, as was represented, and Defense Attorney C. T. Carpenter produced what he said was the charter of a benevolent or general welfare corporation, obtained in White County.

Judge Neil Killough instructed the jury to return a verdict of acquittal.

The four also are appealing magistrate court fines of $50 each on charges of disturbing labor. This charge was continued until the September term of court, according to Prosecuting Attorney Denver Dudley.

The case involving the charges of enticing labor was passed over to the next court term after Dudley opposed a motion by Carpenter that these charges also be dropped.

Pending the calling of the case in September, the four defendants will remain at liberty under their original appeal bonds.

# Sharecroppers Win Appeal From Fines

WYNNE, Ark., Feb. 5.—(AP)—The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union won its first victory with East Arkansas officers today when four union organizers were given directed verdicts of acquittal in circuit court on their appeals from magistrate court fines.

The four, L. M. Mills and W. H. Stultz, both white, and two negroes, R. T. Butler and A. B. Brookins, were fined $50 each in a magistrate's court last November on charges of obtaining money by false pretenses in the solicitation of initiation fees and dues for membership in the union of sharecroppers.

# MORE GUARDS ADDED FOR TENANT LEADERS

## Four Held at Lepanto After Meeting

The guard around the city jail at Lepanto, Ark., was increased to 18 heavily armed officers yesterday after Sheriff J. B. DuBard and City Marshal Jay May said they had heard threats that an attempt would be made to liberate four organizers for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, arrested Saturday night on charges of "disturbing the peace."

At the same time Sheriff DuBard said he would take precautions to preserve order at Harrisburg, the county seat of Poinsett County next Thursday when he said the union planned to march to the public square to prepare demands for relief.

Ward H. Rodgers, discharged FERA instructor; Lucien Koch, director of Commonwealth College at Mena; Atley Delany, Commonwealth student, and Robert Baker, described as a Poinsett County tenant farmer, were arrested during a meeting of 100 negro and white sharecroppers at Lepanto.

City Marshal said Rodgers was speaking "and the other three men were milling about the crowd spreading a lot of gossip that was disturbing the town."

Mrs. Mary Conner Myers, Agricultural Adjustment Administration attorney, sent into the south to investigate complaints by the union that planters were ignoring provisions of acreage reduction contracts as respected the rights of sharecroppers, boarded a plane for Washington yesterday to make her report.

Commenting on the guard around the Lepanto jail, Sheriff DuBard said he wasn't anticipating any trouble, "but that we are not taking any chances."

"There have been threats to storm the jail," he said, "and Marshal May asked me for reinforcements."

He said he had seen circulars distributed by the union, calling a "protest meeting" for Harrisburg next Thursday.

"They plan to meet in the public square, make a lot of speeches and appoint a committee to call on relief officials to make demands. I don't think there will be any trouble, but I'll be prepared to make arrests if any laws are violated."

The circulars were addressed to all persons "recognizing the inadequate administration of relief in Poinsett County."

The arrest of Rodgers Saturday was his second since the sharecropper-planter controversy was renewed in east Arkansas a few weeks ago. He was convicted of anarchy by a magistrate's court at Marked Tree, sentenced to six months in jail and fined $500.

# SPEAKERS ROUTED AT CROPPER MEET

## Officers Fear Trouble and Escort 4 Leaders From County.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Feb. 9.—(AP)—A rally of sharecroppers was broken up by Mississippi county (Ark.) officers at Birdsong, Ark., this afternoon, and four prospective speakers were escorted from the county.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Hale Jackson, of Osceola, said "we decided to stop the meeting and take the leaders out of the county in order to prevent trouble."

"Three other officers and I were parked in a car and we could see by the crowd gathering that there was a possibility of trouble," Jackson said. "So we decided the best thing for all concerned was that we take the four leaders across the line into Poinsett county. They did not resist."

Jackson said one of the men gave his name as Atley Delany (a Commonwealth College student), but that "I didn't get the names of the others."

The proposed meeting at Birdsong was one of a series held by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union in east Arkansas today.

**Socialists Deny Tie-Up.**

Meanwhile, in Memphis socialists, interested in the organization of the tenant farmers, denied a "tie-up" with communists in a "united front."

H. L. Mitchell, of Tyronza, Ark., socialist, and Howard Kester, of Nashville, a Tennessee socialist party leader, were joined here today by Powers Hapgood, a member of the party's national executive committee, for an organization rally of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union at Lepanto, Ark., this afternoon.

Meantime, Ward H. Rodgers, central figure in the sharecropper-landlord controversy, and discharged federal emergency relief administration instructor, remained in Memphis, uncertain about plans he announced yesterday to visit Governor J. M. Futrell, of Arkansas, at Little Rock, with a plea for tents to house "100 evicted sharecropper families" in Poinsett county.

**Backed by Socialists.**

"The socialist party is wholeheartedly behind any organization of laboring people to better their conditions," Hapgood said, "but the party has declined united action with the communist party."

Rodgers said he had "friendly correspondence with the backers of a communist-supported sharecroppers' union in Alabama, but there was never any agreement or further cooperation.

"The Alabama union," he added, "sent us tentative plans for a united front, but the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union has never considered the offer."

The organizers for the union claim that wholesale evictions of sharecroppers in east Arkansas can be seen by any observer.

**Evictions Denied.**

The Rev. J. Abner Sage, Methodist minister at Marked Tree, said "There have been no wholesale evictions" as Rodgers and his friends claim. He added that there had been evictions, in many cases involving "shiftless tenants," but that the number of sharecropper families moving is about the same as usual this time of the year, before the new crop season.

"Many, who contend, according to Rodgers and his friends, that they have no place to go, are merely shiftless," the minister said.

C. T. Carpenter, Marked Tree, counsel for the union and for Rodgers, said that had Mr. Sage "taken the trouble to investigate, he would have found hundreds of eviction notices had been issued, and tenants, mostly of the best sort in this vicinity, have been and are being driven from their homes."

# 4 FARM ORGANIZERS ACQUITTED BY COURT

## Fraud Charges Dismissed by Judge

## RODGERS' TRIAL TODAY

### Barratry Hearing Will Be Held at Lepanto—College Head Will Follow on Similar Charge

Four organizers of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union were given directed verdicts of acquittal in the circuit court at Wynne, Ark., yesterday on appeals from convictions last November for obtaining money under false pretenses, the court holding that there was insufficient evidence.

The four, L. M. Mills and W. H. Stultz, white union organizers, and A. B. Brooker and P. T. Butler, negroes, were charged with having received money fraudulently in representing that the union was a corporation in obtaining membership dues and initiation fees.

Mose Yarbro, negro working on a plantation near Parkin, in testifying for the prosecution yesterday at Wynne, said that he spent his last cent in joining the organization, which promised him $1.57 a day, and he also stated that he was told that "all of my troubles would be over." "They told me I could go home and go to sleep if I was ordered to move from the plantation," Yarbro testified.

In passing on the case, Judge Killough said that the evidence presented was not sufficient to support the charge of obtaining money under false pretenses. He also declared that the directed verdict was not an indorsement or a condemnation of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union.

Appeals of the four from convictions on charges of disturbing labor, to have been heard yesterday, were continued to the September term of court.

**Fraud Charged**

After presentation of the state's case by Denver Dudley, prosecuting attorney, C. T. Carpenter, torney for the union, defending four, produced what he said was certified copy of a charter obtained in White County.

Judge Neil Killough instructed the jury to return a verdict of acquittal.

Litigation between union organizers and East Arkansas officers will move to another front this morning when the barratry trial of Ward Rodgers, Socialist organizer, will be continued at 9 o'clock in Lepanto.

**College Head Accused**

A similar charge against Lucian Koch, president of Commonwealth College at Mena, Ark., will be prosecuted following Rodger's trial. Rodgers is already under sentence on charges of trying to incite a riot against plantation owners.

Rodgers and Koch were arrested when they attempted to hold a meeting of sharecroppers Saturday in Lepanto.

Reports that a sharecroppers' rally was to be held yesterday afternoon in Gilmore, Ark., attracted more than 100 negroes to the village but speakers failed to appear.

Rodgers will be put on the stand this morning to testify in his own defense, Mr. Carpenter said.

# 'Croppers Threaten To Liberate Comrades

LEPANTO, Ark., Feb. 3.—(AP)—The guard around the city jail here was increased to 18 heavily armed officers today after Sheriff J. B. DuBard and City Marshal Jay May said they had heard threats that an attempt would be made to liberate four organizers for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, arrested last night on charges of "disturbing the peace."

At the same time, Sheriff Dubard said he would take precautions to preserve order at Harrisburg, the county seat of Poinsett county, next Thursday when he said the union planned to march to the public square to prepare demands for relief.

Ward H. Rodgers, discharged federal emergency relief administration instructor; Lucien Koch, director of Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark.; Atley Delany, Commonwealth student, and Robert Baker, described as a Poinsett county tenant farmer, were arrested during a meeting of 100 negro and white sharecroppers at Lepanto late yesterday.

# TENANT SYSTEM RULING PRAISED

## Arkansas Planters Pleased By Decision Different Tenants May Occupy Farms

MARKED TREE, ARK., Feb. 12.—(AP)—Planters and officers greeted with enthusiasm today a ruling by Cully A. Cobb, chief of the cotton section of the agricultural adjustment administration on the eviction clause of cotton acreage reduction contracts as the Southern Tenant Farmers Union prepared for a legal battle in support of its own interpretation of the now famous "Section 7."

Under Section 7, Mr. Cobb notified Arkansas authorities yesterday, landlords will be expected to keep the same number of tenants on their lands in 1935 that they had in 1934, but not necessarily the same tenants. He added that this ruling has been in effect throughout the program.

Organizers for the union have insisted that hundreds of sharecropper families have been illegally evicted in east Arkansas, while planters and officers say that only "shiftless" and disloyal tenants have been dismissed at the end of the crop year.

"We feel that a firm stand by the Department of Agriculture will eliminate the bone of contention and therefore do away with the thunder of these paid organizers," said Denver Dudley, Jonesboro, prosecuting attorney, as spokesman for sheriffs in the counties involved in the sharecropper controversy.

C. T. Carpenter, Marked Tree attorney for the union, and for Ward H. Rodgers, former Federal emergency relief administration instructor, and other organizers, describing Mr. Cobb's statement as "of little importance."

"It is not a ruling by a secretary or undersecretary of agriculture," he said, "and has no judicial standing. It is a statement by the head of the cotton section of the AAA, which section has long been dominated by cotton planter interests."

Carpenter is preparing an appeal to be heard by the Arkansas Supreme Court in March in which the union will claim the lower court erred in not granting an injunction to prevent Hiram Norcross, of Tyronza, from evicting a number of tenants. The Supreme Court will be asked to interpret Section 7.

"Not all violations of the cotton contract come under Section 7," Carpenter said. "Planters have reduced the status of tenants and are changing from sharecroppers to day labor. They have withheld the use of fuel, and and equipment. They have withheld parity payments due the sharecropper."

Arkansas.

Agriculture-1935
Labor Conditions.

# *The Sharecroppers, Worst New Deal Victims, Appeal to Workers Here for Aid in Arkansas*

## Three Union Members Will Seek Support of Harlemites

Granted an interview 3-5-35

SUPPOSE THAT as long as you could remember you had been living under conditions far worse than slavery. Suppose that your children were ragged and hungry and your family's weekly rations consisted (if you were lucky) of corn meal, a little flour, some butter, black sorghum molasses and—on rare occasions—a little "fat back."

Suppose you were forced to live in a hovel not fit for a dog and the plantation boss cheated you out of everything you had earned right before your eyes and dared you to protest. Suppose your whole family worked in the cotton fields from dawn to darkness and the boss horsewhipped you if the mules weren't harnessed before sun-up.

Then suppose the United States Government, with its New Deal caused even these intolerable conditions to become far worse and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration nor the Department of Agriculture would even receive a spokesman or a delegation of sharecroppers who are facing actual starvation because of the government's actions. Suppose an official investigation was really made and an unbiased report showing the privation and degredation of 8,000,000 American citizens in the Cotton Belt was suppressed by the AAA.

Having suffered all these things, how would you feel about the Roosevelt Administration? Well, that is exactly how 5,000 members of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union feel. And their feelings were expressed Wednesday by three of their number who arrived here to seek aid in their fight—aid from the other, less exploited victims of the New Deal.

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THE TRIO—E. B. McKinney, 62-year-old Negro vice-president of the union; Ed. Pickering, gnarled president of the Post, Ark., local, and Walter Moskop, embittered executive council member, the latter two white

**E. D. McKINNEY, militant vice-president of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, who arrived here Tuesday to enlist aid for the sharecroppers, is shown with a few typical dwellings of the serfs of King Cotton.**

—received the press in the offices of the League of Industrial Democracy, 112 West Nineteenth street, and told of the union's fight to better the conditions of 8,000,000 sharecroppers— a fight which as been opposed by a reign of terror quite reminiscent of Reconstruction Days.

Theirs is a long story, a tragic one, a story they hope to tell from the platforms of the city's forums, from the pulpits of Harlem, from the street corners, if necessary, to any and all who will listen and try to help these millions of American workers who live under conditions far worse than the serfs in mediaval times. To the press they gave only a fragment.

They explained the plantation system—a system which was not eradicated but really made more vicious by the Civil War and Emancipation Proclamation. They described the exploitation of the tenant farmer—an impoverished worker who has nothing but his ragged family and their toil-roughened hands—a worker who must beg the plantation owner to let him raise a crop on "shares" on a few acres of the latter's land.

If the landlord supplies the tools, the mules and "furnishes" the tenant with a $2 weekly food slip (for the landlord's commissary), sharecropper is **supposed** to receive 50 per cent of proceeds from his crop. If the tenant has his own mule and tools, he is **supposed** to receive 75 per cent. But as the landlord keeps the books, sells the cotton, and figures the deduction, the vast majority of the sharecroppers work year in and year out to find themselves more ragged, more hungry, deeper in debt to the landlord. And as no tenant will be employed by another landlord while he "owes" his last boss money, the sharecropper must remain in his hovel for another year, and another, in actual peonage.

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THE SYSTEM is easily understood when you listen to the 62-year-old E. B. McKinney explain the workings of the "dodalum book" (the $2-a-week commissary food voucher). The landlord charges the tenant 20 cents extra for each of these "dodalum books" and then adds 10 per cent to his total indebtedness at the end of the year. In most cases, McKinney stated, the landlords sell the cotton at market prices, figure out the tenants' shares at a lower rate, deduct the "furnishings" at exorbitant prices and then dare the sharecroppers to protest when they find that they are more deeply indebted than they were at the beginning of the season.

This system began long before McKinney was born and continued through the first thre score years of his existance. Then Roosevelt, the New Deal and the AAA rushed to the "rescue" of the farmer with the Bankhead Bill and the Cotton Reduction Contract. The Brain Trust decided that they could raise the price of cotton by reducing the acreage—and paying the farmers for the reduction.

The plantation owners hailed the plan, pretended to reduce their acreage, pocketed (in most cases) the government money due them and the sharecroppers and intensified the latter's exploitation. If a sharecropper protested, he was evicted and, through connivance, denied even the measly $7.20 a month federal relief which is issued, through local authorities, in Arkansas and other southern states.

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LATER, WHEN the AAA rally insisted upon actual crop reduction, landlords found an even more refined form of exploitation. They started evicting the sharecroppers wholesale and hiring what help was needed by the day—at 60 cents for 13 hours' work. Walter Moskop of Marked Tree, Ark., was one of these victims. During a twelve-month period, Moskop worked only 28 days. He and two other evicted families have been living in a two-room shack since his eviction.

It was these deplorable conditions which brought the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union into existance. And the formation of the union was a signal for a terror drive against the thousands of homeless sharecroppers. Their organizers, including young Ward Rogers, a former divinity student and FERA instructor, were arrested and jailed under archaic statutes. Meetings of sharecroppers were declared illegal and membership in the union automatically caused eviction in most cases. Prominent speakers, include Jennie Lee, one time member of Parliament in England, and others were threatened and escorted out of town and the usual race bogies were resurrected when Negroes and whites joined the union.

Dspite the terrorism, however, the union, with headquarters in Marked Tree, has attracted 5,000 members in Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi and Oklahoma. With the aid of Norman Thomas, militant Socialists, and interested groups throughout the country, the union hopes to enlist a large percentage of the 8,000,000 enslaved sharecroppers in the country.

Commenting on the situation Wednesday, Mr. Thomas accused the Roosevelt Administration of suppressing the recent AAA report of Mary Connor Myers which exposes the conditions in the cotton belt. He declared that the AAA has made itself an ally of the plantation system and landlords in the South to an unprecedented degree.

He declared that it is time to call the New Deal bluff and stated that more restrictions have been put on civil liberties under Roosevelt than at any other period in our history.

Lastly, he said, it is time for the city workers to know the deplorable conditions under which the farm workers live, since sooner or later, the government will try to colonize unemployed city dwellers.

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THE CITY WORKERS will hear of the condition of the sharecroppers if they listen to E. B. McKinney, Ed. Pickering and Walter Moskop. The three union leaders hope to speak in every section of the city—especially Harlem. They are expected to appear in this community next week.

New York World Telegram

FEB 22 1935

# Strong Leadership Is Spreading Union of Share-Croppers

## Controversy with Planters Moves East and South from Arkansas—Outside Agitators Seen as Menace to Organization.

*This is the second of three stories on the increasingly acute share-cropper situation in the South, where 8,000,000 Americans are living in a condition approaching peonage. Mr. Fraser is a well-known newspaper and magazine writer who has been investigating that situation.*

By HUGH RUSSELL FRASER.

*Written for NEA Service, Inc.*

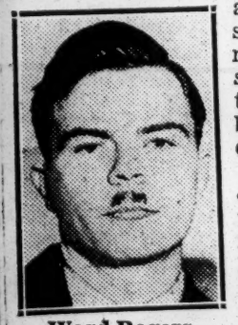
THE share-cropper—the economic peon of the South—has at last come into the spotlight.

In the world's richest cotton belt—the valley of the lower Mississippi—the smoke of controversy between share-cropper and planter is spreading east and south from its center, Arkansas.

Behind the smoke stand certain personalities, all taking vital parts in the struggle.

On the side of the share-croppers and small tenant farmers there are four:—

William H. Stultz, 45-year-old president of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. Until four years ago Stultz was a school teacher in middle Tennessee. He moved to Arkansas and became a share-cropper.



Ward Rogers.

A man of good character, a hard worker, he was forced off the land by the cotton acreage reduction program. He made certain demands, he says, for minimum living conditions, and a Negro family for substituted for his.

**Helped Form Union.**

Associated with Stultz in the management of the union is H. L. Mitchell, of Tyronza, Ark. Mitchell, who is only 30, but looks older, used to run a dry cleaning establishment in Tyronza; but his father had been a share-cropper, and when the New Deal came along, promising justice to the "forgotten man," Mitchell assumed the share-cropper and small tenant farmer of the South was that man, and so he aided in organization of the union.

Today he is executive secretary and in his 1928 Chevrolet car he batters about the country, urging the people he knows so well, and has known for years, to organize.

Next in influence, and more far-reaching than any of the others in power, is C. T. Carpenter, a lawyer, of Marked Tree, Ark.

Carpenter is not a socialist. He is a Democrat, and he boasts he will never vote any other ticket.

**Lawyer Does His Share.**

To Carpenter have come all the legal problems of the union.

It is this middle-aged, grave, dignified man, with a fighting demeanor, who goes into court week after week to represent evicted tenants, imprisoned agitators, and any and all of those connected with the union who, rightly or wrongly, have fallen into the hands of the law.

Carpenter is a native of Virginia, a graduate of the University of Kentucky, and despite protestations that he is in the controversy simply as a lawyer, working for a fee, it is obvious that he believes deeply and profoundly in the share-croppers' cause.

Next come the agitators. Keen students say the outside agitators, from whatever source and of whatever character, are a menace to the union.

**Menace Seen in Agitators.**

Foremost among these is Ward H. Rodgers, 24-year-old graduate of Vanderbilt University, and at one time a student at Boston Divinity School.

Rodgers, in a speech at Marked Tree, Ark., said, according to his own admission, "I could lead a mob." He claimed to be only using the words to show the townspeople the menace of the sharecroppers' problem, rather than to indicate that he would actually lead a mob, or wanted to.

But the words became suddenly a powerful blow against the whole farm union cause.

Norman Thomas, Socialist candidate for President in 1932, had urged the union to adopt peaceful means. He had begged them to avoid even the semblance of violence. Carpenter and Stultz and Mitchell had rigorously held to this doctrine.

**Powerful Aid Lost.**

But now Rodgers, in one ill-advised phrase, had advertised the union all over the South in the blackest of terms.

A distinguished and influential Memphis lawyer had become interested in the cause. He was considering even tendering his services to the union—when, suddenly, this Rodgers speech ended every last vestige of his interest.

He picked up his telephone, called those who tried to interest him, and withdrew from any further part in the matter, stating that he could not take an active part in any cause in which the lynching of anyone was openly advocated, directly or indirectly.

Most pained of all by Rodgers' remarks was Dr. William R. Amberson, famed professor of physiology at the University of Tennessee and the chairman of the Socialist party in Memphis.

Dr. Amberson, like Norman Thomas, had insisted on peaceful methods and to him more than any other one man must go the general non-violence policy on the part of the union.

**Given Jail Sentence.**

Rodgers himself soon had cause to regret his words.

Arrested on a charge of anarchy and inciting to riot, he was convicted and sentenced to six months. His appeal is pending.

Last but not least is Lucian Koch, 27-year-old president of Commonwealth College, a co-operative institution at Mena, Ark.

Small of stature, but with a square jaw and curly hair, Koch speaks in a low voice. The union agitator usually takes with him a student or two from his college when he goes about speaking.

It was on one of these occasions, while addressing a meeting of whites and blacks at a Negro church, that he was seized by four white men, taken out and beaten.

One of his students, who followed him out to see what was going on, was also beaten.

**Planter Is Rebuffed.**

The sharecroppers contend that all the violence has been on the other side.

This general policy of non-violence on the part of the union has not gone unnoticed, however, on the part of the planters themselves.

One of these, Vernon Paul, speaking at Parkin, Ark., paid a personal tribute to the motives of both Rodgers and Koch.

A big planter himself, owning more than 2,000 acres, he said that there would be no persecution or eviction of sharecroppers on his property for mere membership in the union.

He appealed to the union not to try to lump all the planters together for the mistakes and unfairness of the few. He made a personal plea for co-operation.

When he finished speaking, he offered his hand to Koch. But the union leader refused to shake hands.

This is the feeling which the outside agitator has brought to the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union and which is fast closing the door to co-operation between the factions.

# MARKED TREE BUSY WITH RELIEF PLANS

## Co-operative Association to Hold Meeting Friday

## JOBLESS WILL REGISTER

### Group of Landowners, Business Men and Others Start Committees to Work for Aid of Town's Unemployed

Special to The Commercial Appeal

MARKED TREE, Ark., March 3.—A second meeting of the Marked Tree Co-operative Association, organized last week to help find jobs for unemployed farm and industrial laborers here, will be held Friday night.

Reports will be heard from the executive, farm employment, industrial employment and emergency relief committees.

Carrying out President Roosevelt's oft-repeated request that each community aid its own needy and jobless, 75 citizens, composed of tenant farmers, sharecroppers, farm and land owners, merchants and business men of this place and the immediate vicinity in organizing the association adopted the slogan, "Marked Tree takes care of its own."

**Subscribe To Fund**

At next Friday's meeting, progress will be reported on registration of unemployed persons at the association's office in the American Legion Hut and results of a canvass of every landowner, business concern and private individuals here and in this vicinity, to determine how many farming or other jobs can be offered will be made known.

Business men, small salaried workers, farmers and even those drawing very small pay on part-time jobs already have subscribed to a fund to pay for immediate emergency relief among the unemployed here. Assistance is needed now by members of unemployed families who are ill. A thorough investigation will be made of every case before any money is disbursed, it was said.

An effort will be made by the association to obtain some federal work projects to provide jobs.

**"Not Handing Out Doles"**

"We are not setting up a relief organization to hand out doles or supplies," said the Rev. Abner Sage, Methodist minister here, who was elected executive secretary of the association. "Neither are we making any wide promises of any description. We are simply a group of citizens, composed of people from every walk of life, whose purpose is to try to relieve the unemployment situation here and in this immediate vicinity. We will take care of our own and not transients or people from other communities."

Any citizen, man or woman, of Marked Tree and its vicinity is urged to join the association. It is believed that the negroes will form a similar association.

Many landowners who joined the association already have agreed to increase their number of sharecroppers at least 10 per cent over the present number. The Chapman & Dewey Lumber Co. here is employing 200 men in its plant and working about 35 families in clearing land and building homes for more share-croppers. E. P. Burton gave the use of a truck to haul supplies and move tenants. L. V. Stephens is treasurer of the association, which does not charge membership dues.

**Committees' Personnel**

The association's committees are:

Executive—A. J. Sharpe, W. R. Payne, J. Schonberger.

Farm employment—A. C. Spellings, George Williams, Louis Ritter, Dr. B. F. Taylor, T. C. Brigance.

Industrial employment — Milton Craft, James Fox, Dr. J. B. Phillips, Harry Ritter, Frank Russell, E. P. Burton.

Emergency relief — Dr. J. L. Baird, Martin Worthy, Mrs. L. V. Holland, Mrs. E. L. Pierce.

Membership—John Brunner, W. H. Harris, Will Walker, N. L. Parker, Fred Bradsher, J. F. Dobyns, Ed Pittman, Hays Kee, W. E. Shaw, J. W. Shrum.

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# INVESTIGATOR DENIES SHARECROPPER REPORT

Commercial Appeal

## Mrs. Myers Seeks Source of Statement

2-3-35

## TENANTS HOLD MEETING

Memphis

## Discrimination In Distribution Of ERA Funds Charged In Session Held At Harrisburg —Rodgers Will Maks Tours

Published accounts of an alleged report by Mrs. Mary Conner Myers, special AAA attorney, on her recent investigation of sharecropper complaints in northeastern Arkansas were denied by her yesterday in Washington as 300 sharecroppers gathered at the Poinsett County courthouse in Harrisburg, Ark., to protest "inadequate" distribution of ERA relief funds.

Mrs. Myers told The Associated Press that she was seeking to discover the source of the published report, expressing indignation that anyone might pretend to speak for her.

### Copy Sent Paper

A copy of the report which Mrs. Myers denies was sent The Commercial Appeal, but was not used.

Called by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, the Harrisburg meeting was held on the courthouse steps after Sheriff T. A. Dubard had warned leaders that inflammatory remarks might lead to complications.

Petitions are being circulated by the union asking dismissal of T. A. Bettis, Poinsett County relief administrator, who, it is charged, is discriminating against union members. This Mr. Bettis denied when approached by a committee during a recess of the meeting.

"Membership in any organization, church or lodge," he told the committee, "has no bearing on distribution of relief. We are trying fairly and squarely to help the neediest as far as our funds will allow us."

### Discrimination Charged

Discrimination against the union was charged in telegrams sent yesterday by Lucian Koch, 27-year-old president of Commonwealth College at Mena, Ark., and [illegible] organizer, to Federal Relief Administrator Harry L. Hopkins and State Relief Administrator W. R. Dyess.

Koch was the principal speaker at the rally. Sharecroppers in attendance unanimously recommended that the telegrams be sent.

Meanwhile Ward Rodgers, 24-year-old Socialist organizer and central figure among the union leaders, announced yesterday at Marked Tree that he contemplated making a speaking tour in which he would "tell the world" of "condition among sharecroppers."

Two convictions against Rodgers which have grown out of his organization activities—one for anarchy and one for obstructing streets—have been appealed to the March session of circuit court in Poinsett County.

Walter Moskop, Marked Tree sharecropper, served as chairman at the Harrisburg meeting.

Several weeks were spent by Mrs. Myers in investigating conditions in Arkansas before she returned to Washington Sunday.

Mrs. Myers attended the trial of Rodgers for anarchy in Marked Tree, which followed his arrest for making inflammatory remarks at a rally of sharecroppers. Following his conviction, she journeyed back to Memphis in an automobile driven by H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the union.

Before she left the city she declared that any statements regarding her investigation would have to come from Jerome N. Frank, chief counsel of the AAA, her superior. Along with several other of the "brain trust" element, Mr. Frank was dismissed Wednesday in a shake-up of AAA officials by Administrator Chester C. Davis.

Howard Kester, Nashville, who is in northeast Arkansas claiming to be the personal representative of Norman Thomas, national Socialist leader, last night approached officials in Lepanto to ask permission to hold a meeting there Saturday. Four union organizers were arrested last Saturday in Lepanto when they attempted to hold a meeting.

Reports yesterday were that the union also was planning to hold a meeting of sharecropper today at Gilmore, Ark., in Crittenden County.

Koch and a student from his college received a beating at the hands of unidentified persons when they attempted to hold a meeting of negro tenants at a Gilmore church last week.

# Tenant Farmers Union Organizers Closely Guarded In Arkansas Jail

Commercial Appeal

2-3-35

Memphis

LEPANTO, ARK., Feb. 3.—(AP)—The guard around the city jail here was increased to 18 heavily armed officers today after Sheriff J. B. Dubard and City Marshal Jay May said they had heard threats that an attempt would be made to liberate four organizers for the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, arrested last night on charges of "disturbing the peace."

At the same time, Sheriff Dubard said he would take precautions to preserve order at Harrisburg, the county seat of Poinsett County, next Thursday when he said the union planned to march to the public square to prepare demands for relief.

Ward H. Rodgers, discharged Federal emergency relief administration instructor; Lucien Koch, director of Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark., Atley Delany, Commonwealth student, and Robert Baker, described as a Poinsett County tenant farmer, were arrested during a meeting of 100 negro and white sharecroppers at Lepanto late yesterday.

City Marshal May said Rodgers was speaking "and the other three men were milling about the crowd spreading a lot of gossip that was disturbing the town."

At Memphis, Tenn., Mrs. Mary Conner Myers, Agricultural Adjustment Administration attorney, sent into the South to investigate complaints by the union that planters were ignoring provisions of acreage reduction contracts as respected the rights of sharecroppers, boarded a plane for Washington to make her report.

Commenting on the guard around the Lepanto jail, Sheriff Dubard said he wasn't anticipating any trouble, "but that we are not taking any chances."

"There have been threats to storm the jail," he said, "and Marshal May asked me for reinforcements."

He said he had seen circulars distributed by the union, calling a "protest meeting" for Harrisburg next Thursday.

"They plan to meet in the public square, make a lot of speeches and appoint a committee to call on relief officials to make demands. I don't think there will be any trouble, but I'll be prepared to make arrests if any laws are violated."

The circulars were addressed to all persons "recognizing the inadequate administration of relief in Poinsett County."

The arrest of Rodgers last night was his second since the sharecropper-planter controversy was renewed in east Arkansas a few weeks ago. He was convicted of anarchy by Magistrate's Court at Marked Tree, sentenced to six months in jail and fined $500 on a charge that he attempted to incite sharecroppers to riot against planters. His appeal will be heard in Circuit Court in March. He was dismissed by the FERA following his arrest. The charge was anarchy.

Koch and Bob Reed, a Commonwealth student and a member of the International Labor Defense, reported Saturday that they were removed from a sharecroppers meeting the night before at Gilmore, Ark., and beaten with pistols.

Rodgers, a young Socialist, and other organizers of the union, are described by east Arkansas officers and planters as "radicals, and outside agitators, interested only in stirring up trouble and collecting membership dues for the union."

Reached at Jonesboro, C. T. Carpenter, attorney for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, said he would represent the four men at a municipal hearing tomorrow at 3 p.m. at Lepanto, before Mayor M. P. Smith.

# More Tenant Farmers Given Jobs In Arkansas

Commercial Appeal

2-3-35

MEMPHIS, TENN., March 2.—(AP)—Planters of Poinsett County, Ark., seat of recent controversies between landlords and sharecroppers, have volunteered to increase by 10 per cent the employment of tenant farmers, W. B. Chapman, a Marked Tree, Ark., planter, said here tonight.

The program for increased employment was agreed upon last night at an organization meeting of the Marked Tree Cooperative Association, Chapman said.

# Sharecroppers' Meeting Broken Up; Leaders May 'Demand' State Militia

MEMPHIS, TENN., Feb. 9.—(AP)—H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, tonight wired Gov. J. Marion Futrell, of Arkansas that "upon further violations of our rights we shall petition you for the protection of State militia."

The telegram was sent from here, immediately after the arrival of four speakers for the union who said they were accosted by a "mob" at Birdsong, Ark., late today and then escorted by Mississippi County (Ark.) officers across the county line into Poinsett County "to prevent trouble."

Atley Delany, a student of Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark., said he and three companions, Roy Chaplin, Bob Reed, Commonwealth students, and Gene Hayes, a sharecropper, were met by a "mob of planters" as they approached the site for a proposed rally of tenant farmers.

"The mob searched us, demanded to see our union charter, then kicked us and told us to 'get along'," Delany said. "The officers courteously escorted us away from the scene."

Chief Deputy Sheriff Hale Jackson, of Osceola, Ark., said he and three other officers escorted the four men out of the county "because of the possibility of trouble."

Mitchell's telegram to Gov. Futrell follows:

"At a duly scheduled and legal meeting of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union near Tyronza Saturday afternoon armed planters and their associates assaulted union speakers and prevented them from addressing the meeting. We protest against this illegal and un-American violation of our fundamental rights of free speech and assemblage. We are a legal organization incorporated under the laws of Arkansas and we petition you as governor of this State to protect the rights of Arkansas citizens. We demand that you take necessary steps for our protection. Upon further violations of our rights we shall petition you for the protection of State militia."

Powers Hapgood, of Chicago, "as representative of the American Civil Liberties Union," also telegraphed the governor for "immediate protection required to prevent abridging constitutional rights of free speech and loss of life."

Mitchell said that he and Ward H. Rodgers and Lucien Koch, organizers of the Tenant Farmers' Union, would go to Little Rock Monday to ask the governor to provide a "tented city" for sharecroppers who have been evicted from land.

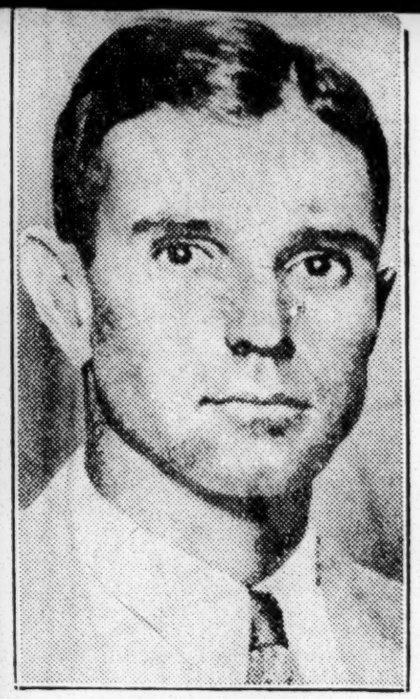
A rally of tenant farmers at Lepanto, Ark., today went off without difficulty. It was there last Saturday that Rodgers, Koch, Delany and Robert Baker, a sharecropper, were taken into custody.

Rodgers and Koch later were fined on charges of obstructing streets and other two dismissed.

"Three other officers and I were parked in a car and we could see by the crowd gathering that there was a possibility of trouble," Chief Deputy Jackson said. "So we decided the best thing for all concerned was that we take the four leaders across the line into Poinsett County. They did not resist."

The proposed meeting at Birdsong was one of a series held by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union in East Arkansas today.

Meanwhile, in Memphis, socialists, interested in the organization of the tenant



POWERS HAPGOOD.

farmers, denied a "tie-up" with communists in a "united front."

Meantime, Ward H. Rodgers, central figure in the shrecropper-landlord controversy, and discharged Federal Emergency Relief Administration instructor, remained in Memphis, uncertain about plans he announced yesterday to visit Gov. Futrell at Little Rock with a plea for tents to house "100 evicted sharecropper families" in Poinsett County.

"The Socialist Party is wholeheartedly behind any organization of laboring people to better their conditions," Haygood said, "but the party has declined united action with the Communist Party."

**Rodgers said he had "friendly correspondence with the backers of a communist - supported sharecroppers' union in Alabama, but there was never any agreement or further cooperation.**

**"The Alabama union," he added, "sent us tentative plans for a united front, but the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union has never considered the offer."**

The organization for the union claim that wholesale evictions of sharecroppers in East Arkansas can be seen by any observer.

The Rev. J. Abner Sage, Methodist minister at Marked Tree, said "there have been no wholesale evictions" as Rodgers and his friends claim." He added that there had been evictions, in many cases involving "shiftless tenants," but that the number of sharecropper families moving is about the same as usual this time of the year, before the new crop season.

"Many, who contend, according to Rodgers and his friends, that they have no place to go, are merely shiftless," the minister said.

C. T. Carpenter, Marked Tree, counsel for the union and for Rodgers, said that had Mr. Sage "taken the trouble to investigate, he would have found hundreds of eviction notices had been issued, and tenants, mostly of the best sort in this vicinity, had been and are being driven from their homes."

# TENANT FARMERS MAY GET RELIEF

## Senators Bankhead, Russell Offer Measures to End Present Agricultural System

WASHINGTON, Feb. 10. (AP)—Officials said today there was growing support within the administration for a measure drawn by Senator Bankhead (D., Ala.), which proposes federal loans to help end the tenant system of farming.

Bankhead, author of the compulsory cotton control act, drafted his bill while agricultural adjustment officials were concerned with reports of rising resentment against the AAA and landlords among southern share-croppers and renters.

The Alabama senator's proposal would establish an agency similar to the Home Owners' Loan Corporation. Only tenants would be eligible for the loans to purchase lands already in cultivation. The loans would bear a low rate of interest and would be amortized over a period of 30 years.

"I want the rentals now being paid to finance, ultimately," Bankhead said, "the farm purchased by each tenant."

Secretary Wallace and the Agricultural Adjustment administration have said nothing publicly about the latest Bankhead bill but some officials who have studied the problem feel it is the most logical approach toward the elimination of a system admittedly bad.

**Russell Offers Measure**

The national resources board in its report assailed the southern tenant system but concrete proposals to get rid of it were lacking.

Some supporters of the Bankhead measure would not be surprised if President Roosevelt approved his proposal or similar legislation. Senator Russell (D., Ga.), also has put forward a measure with ideas similar to those in the Bankhead bill.

Although the AAA had an investigator, Mrs. Mary C. Myers, in eastern Arkansas during recent trouble there between spokesmen for tenants and authorities, there was little indication today that any drastic change would result from her report.

An attempt was made to interpret the voluntary cotton contract as stipulating that landlords must retain the tenants on their places who were there when the owners joined the control plan.

AAA officials said today landlords were not required to keep the same tenants and that the contract meant landowners were not to displace tenants without obtaining others to take their places. Even this requirement is elastic. Mrs. Meyers' report is in the hands of AAA officials but it has not been made public.

AAA officials said that reverses in recent years had deprived many former landowners of their farms and that there had been a surprising growth of tenant conditions in areas outside the South.

# 5 ARKANSAS SOLONS PROBE LABOR COLLEGE

## Investigation Follows Rumors During Disturbances of Share Croppers.

MENA, Ark., Feb. 16.—(AP)—Five members of the Arkansas legislature, delegated to investigate Commonwealth College here, today were initiated into the informalities of a co-operative labor school, and took some mild joshing from the school's authorities on their quest for "communist activities."

A statement from Senator J. L. Shaver, committeeman, that there had been unpleasant "rumors about the college," was met by a counter-statement from 28 year-old Lucien Koch, director of the college, that there had been "rumors about the legislature."

The committee sat late today at the Polk county courthouse here to take testimony from the Commonwealth officials under provisions of a general assembly resolution charging the school with "fostering communism and un-American teachings." Koch's invitation was declined but the committee accepted his suggestion that they attend "a typical class."

Wearing a red sweater, leather jerkins and puttees, the director quizzed a score of students for 40 minutes on the greenback problem which followed the Civil War and "the Knights of Labor movement in the 19th century." The procedure was on a basis of camaraderie. Koch standing with one foot on a chair most of the time.

The legislators looked on as the students, seated on long wooden benches before an open wood fire, smoked and answered or asked questions.

Subsequently the visitors went to "the museum of social change," recently dedicated by the college "to record the fall of capitalism," and saw there exhibits ranging from ropes alleged to have been used in lynchings to silk lingerie labeled as having been discarded by the once-rich.

Senator Clyde Ellis made a detailed examination of the school library for communist literature.

**EMPLOYE OF COLLEGE TELLS OF "FREE LOVE"**

MENA, Ark., Feb. 16.—(UP)—Free love goes with free thought at Commonwealth College, an employe of the labor school testified before a joint legislative investigating committee today.

T. J. Thomas, who has worked on the college farm near here the past four years, told a story of free living, of bathing parties by mixed groups of students and instructors in Mill creek, that traverses the campus. Men and women live together openly, he said, and in his four years he has never seen men fight over the women.

On moonlight nights during the summer, Thomas testified, he has seen nude couples lying on rocks along the banks of Mill creek. Married women who attended the college had relations with the men students and instructors, he said.

More testimony of improper relations among college students and instructors was given by J. E. Sheppard, justice of the peace, who lives across the road from the college entrance.

He described roadside "petting" parties and of couples caught in compromising positions. His presence caused no change in the positions or brought no comment from the couples, he testified.

Conditions are so immoral at the school, Sheppard told the committee, that he has forbidden women members of his family to cross the road from his home onto the college farm.

Thomas, likewise, testified he never allowed his wife to come on the farm.

## Help Or Hush!

Government snoopers and busybodies of all sorts who have been having a field day at the expense of Eastern Arkansas at last have a real opportunity to join hands with the citizens and do something worthwhile.

Business men, farmers and good people generally around Marked Tree are now forming an association to take care of unemployed sharecroppers. A survey is under way. Landowners of their own free will have agreed to increase the number of sharecroppers on their farms by 10 per cent, or 20 per cent above last year. In addition, a fund will be raised to take care of the sick and the indigent who are dependent upon the sharecroppers. Many of the unemployed are joining in the co-operative plan.

While real, earnest efforts such as this are in the making, Norman Thomas sits back in New York, calmly speaks of "bloodshed" and, egged on by newspapers and agitators, demands that the government make public a report on Arkansas conditions by a woman investigator. Knowing nothing about Arkansas, its manners, its customs or its people, Thomas and his sort would have the country believe that this report reveals a horrible state of affairs.

As a fact, this report, if honestly made, would reveal simply that Marked Tree is not particularly different from hundreds of other communities in the south. It has successful farmers, who by thrift and industry have been able to buy and improve land and build homes for themselves and their children. It has churches and schools. It also has farmers who, in common with people throughout the nation, are feeling the pinch of hard times, have been thrown out of work and find themselves hard put to make a living. Some of them have earnestly tried to get work, but have found little.

Instead of singling out a community at such a time and swooping down on it with a lot of wild ideas and loose talk, stirring up class hatred and discontent, it would be the part of good sense and real service if Mr. Thomas and his kind would buckle down to a real and purposeful effort to help. They might well take a note from the lecture of Federal Judge Vaught at Oklahoma City last week, when he sent a group of agitators to jail.

"The trouble is," said Judge Vaught, "that most of you have been more interested in making agitating speeches and stirring up trouble than in looking after the public welfare. If everybody would do as you have done—interfere with the carrying out of the laws—there wouldn't be any government left in this country."

Arkansas.

Agriculture—1935
Labor Conditions

# Talk of Tenant Evictions Overdone, Reporter Finds

BY THE REV. J. ABNER SAGE

THERE has been so much ado over the condition of the southern tenant farmers of late, that I have tried to find out the real facts about the plantation system in this section and to set those facts out for all who want them. With the organization of the "Southern Tenant Farmers' Union" and the great amount of radical propaganda and agitation involving not only the white and negro farmers of this area but many people in nationally prominent position, there have been sensational charges of oppression of farm tenants by greedy landlords, political corruption, peonage, robbery and other deplorable things. Statements are made, broadside, and oratory is flowing in abundance. A high government official was misled by a news distributing agency of national scope as stating that conditions through this area could be compared only to that of war-torn Belgium and the fleeing refugees." Young Ward Rogers, burning flame of radicalism, announces that he is appealing to the governor of Arkansas to supply 100 tents at Marked Tree to house the homeless and helpless tenants who have been evicted from their homes on plantations because they have dared to demand justice in their business dealings.

### The Facts

What are the facts about all this, and what are the conditions?

To begin with, let's consider this matter of homeless families wandering about the country, crowding the highways and being cared for by fellow workers and sympathetic friends. It is charged that such conditions prevail, and that these conditions are due to the eviction of tenant farmers from their plantation homes by the landlords. Furthermore, it is charged by the leaders and organizers of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union that these evictions are because of the tenants having joined the union in order to force their employers to pay them the money which their contracts calls for.

I have made careful inquiry among all those whom I could have any reason to believe were in position to know the facts, and they all agree with my own observation that no such condition exists. In fact, there is less suffering from poverty than at this season a year ago, and much less than there was two years ago. Certain conditions give a visitor unaccustomed to the customs of this region the impression that there are many without homes. I will note these conditions.

### Moving Season

First of all let it be said that this is what has been commonly called by everyone throughout the plantation area "the moving season." The sight of a wagon or an old truck loaded with a conglomeration of cheap furniture, bed springs, mattresses, often a stove and several joints of stovepipe and all surmounted by a family of roughly dressed farming people, whites or negroes, is a familiar one. In most instances they are "sharecroppers" who are moving off of one farm to another. Most of these people are either totally illiterate or have had almost no school training. The greater proportion are negroes. In a large percentage of such cases they are moving to another farm of their own accord. They often have very little reason for making a change except that they "just wanted to move." It is the old trait of human nature which finds expression in the familiar line, "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence." The relation of landlord to tenant is such an intricate one and so highly personal that it would be impossible to attempt to give any general observations or draw any general conclusions about these changes of tenants and moving of families. If you were to talk to the persons involved, each would have a different story to tell. There would be many who think that they have found a new place to make a crop where the land is richer. There would be some who are moving "because 'the old 'oman' had some words with the neighbors" over on the farm where they have made a crop last year. There would be some who "didn't like the school teacher over in our community." There would be another who was moving because his "gal was about to marry a fellow over there that we didn't like." Another whose oldest son or daughter or wife or husband had died, making it impossible for them to handle so large a farm acreage as before, and so they are now moving to a smaller place. Every one of these stories involves the human element which is part and parcel of the whole tenant farmer-landlord relationship. But, whatever the cause, there is at this season of the year a vast amount of moving and shifting about among the farming people who rent lands or work "on the shares."

### Drouth Sends In Families

This year there has been a new factor introduced into this "moving scene." It is that of the numberless families from the drouth-stricken areas of Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and even from states farther away, who came into the Delta section last fall with their families to pick cotton and to find places where they might "sharecrop" another year. Many of these families have stayed on, living in tents, abandoned farm shacks and barns or finding day work whereby they might "get by." Many of them have simply taken up their abode as "squatters" on farms and timber lands. They constitute a problem to the social construction of this entire country, and because they are often destitute they have been a care on the federal relief rolls, on the churches and on the community at large. Some, who have shown themselves to be worthy, have been given crops and homes by landowners, but for most of them there were no places available. The fact is that there have been very few places open to put new tenants on. And this calls for a word on this subject of "evictions."

My dictionary tells me that "evictions" means "to dispossess by legal process." The plantation negro calls it "puttin' 'em offn de place." If it were the case of a laborer in a factory or a worker in any other type of business, we would simply say, "He got fired." Probably if it were a high government official, the papers would say, "His resignation was demanded."

A Poinsett County Tenant Farmer

### About Evictions

Now, I know there have been some "evictions." I have not the facilities for finding out just how many. I can report on a few plantations, however, which I have had the opportunity to investigate. If these are typical of the remainder of this section of the cotton country, I must say that I have never heard as much disturbance raised over anything so trivial. For example:

The largest owner of plantation lands in this immediate section is the Chapman & Dewey Farms, owned and operated by Memphis business men. Their farm manager is A. C. Spellings. I asked Mr. Spellings about the number of evictions of tenants they had made and was surprised to learn that there had been only five. This means that there have been less than one per cent of evictions, because this company has a total of between 500 and 600 families farming about 8,000 acres of cotton. Counting an average of five people to the family, this seems that more than 2,500 people are involved in this relationship of tenant-landlord. And only five evictions. I had heard so many wild stories about the great number of tenants being evicted and left without homes that I could scarcely believe I had understood Mr. Spellings when he replied to my question on the matter, "Five." I wonder how many factories and stores can show a record of fewer than one per cent of employes discharged or let out because of "business conditions"?

"Why were these five tenant farmers evicted from the Chapman-Dewey Farms, Mr. Spellings?" was my next question. Here is my answer:

| | |
|---|---|
| Running a house of prostitution | 1 |
| Stealing (thievery) | 2 |
| Refusing to gather crop because of argument with farm manager | 1 |
| Insubordination, drunkenness, gambling | 1 |
| Total | 5 |

Following my talk with Mr. Spellings, I looked up one of the other large operators of farm lands in the Marked Tree area of Poinsett County. I went to see L. V. Ritter, president of the E. Ritter Company. The Ritter lands I found are farmed by 94 tenants, classified as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Sharecroppers, white | 48 |
| Sharecroppers, negroes | 30 |
| Total | 78 |
| Share tenants, all white | 14 |
| Cash renters, white | 2 |
| Grand total | 94 |

(The 14 "share-tenants" who furnish their own farming equipment and finance, paying the landowner one-fourth from the sale of the crop, each have a member of "sharecroppers" working for them. The exact figures were not available).

"Mr. Ritter, how many evictions have you had among your tenants?" I asked.

### No Evictions

"Why, none at all," was the calm reply. "Our folks have all been doing well and we have had no trouble."

So far as I had not found enough disturbance of the social and industrial structure of our county to get excited over. Certainly not enough to justify mass meetings, threats of "lynching every landholder in Poinsett County," or appealing to the governor of the state to supply "100 tents to furnish home for the hordes of evicted tenants wandering helplessly over the country." So, I decided to get the worst of this picture. I had not found out where the real trouble lay.

Accordingly, I went to Hiram Norcross, owner and operator of the famous Norcross plantation at Tyronza, Ark., our neighbor town five miles away. I had heard the street orators talk a great deal about the heartless manner in which Norcross had turned his tenants out of their homes. Surely, I thought, here I will find that they have displaced nearly all their sharecroppers. I had heard this freely talked among the negroes and white farmers who gathered on the streets of Marked Tree for the public meetings and "speakings" conducted every Saturday by Ward Rogers and others. What did I find to be the facts about the Norcross evictions? Here it is in question and answer form:

Q—Mr. Norcross, how many acres of cotton do you farm?

A—A little above 2,600 acres.

Q—How many families did you have working as tenants on these 2,600 acres?

A—Two hundred and four last year. This year we are dividing our land up in such a way as to take care of as many people as possible in these days when laborers are looking for jobs and when we feel that everyone who can do so ought to arrange their work to take care of as many as possible. Therefore, we will have about 45 more families on our plantation this year than we

had in 1934.

Q—But, now, Mr. Norcross, tell me about all those evictions. How many have you had?

A—We have actually evicted three. My contracts with the tenants call for a settlement and new contract at the end of 1934. I notified 23 families in advance that they could move. Eleven of these moved without asking any questions. Twelve families undertook to stay anyway, and so we filed a legal notice for these 12 families to move. All but three have moved, but these three refused to move, and it has been necessary to file suit against them. The five days required is up tomorrow, but I will wait to see how the weather is before I have them put out. I would not have them put out in the rain or during really bad weather, regardless of any legal right.

# FARM TENANT UNION HURT BY OUTSIDERS

## Arkansas Planters Aroused by Socialist Sponsorship, Varied Membership.

4-19-35

## RACE QUESTION A FACTOR

## Share-Croppers' Trip East and Stories Going Out of State Also Caused Reprisals.

*This is the fourth of a series of articles revealing the economic status of share-croppers in the South under the crop curtailment program of the AAA, written by a* TIMES *correspondent in the field.*

By F. RAYMOND DANIELL.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., April 18.—One of the weaknesses of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union since its creation last Summer has been that it included in its ranks many who were not farmers and that it was sponsored chiefly by Socialists from outside Arkansas, where its operations centred.

It was formed following a visit to the cotton country by Norman Thomas, Socialist leader from New York, who was shocked at the conditions under which the share-croppers lived—conditions which are no better and no worse than those under which their fellow-tenant farmers live in other cotton-producing States.

The two leaders in the movement toward organization were H. L. Mitchell, proprietor of a cleaning and dyeing establishment at Tyronza, and Clay East, the manager of a filling station in that little community near Market Tree in Poinsett County.

Both of them were Socialists and both had political ambitions. The former tried to run for State Representative and the latter wanted to be Sheriff. Now both have found it expedient to leave Poinsett County.

The two young Socialists of Tyronza found a willing helper in Ward H. Rodgers, a graduate of Vanderbilt University, who had been sent into Poinsett County by the FERA to spread learning among the unemployed.

Mr. Rodgers burned with the zeal of a crusader, and wrote a friend in Chicago that Communists and Socialists were all one to him and that he and his followers in Poinsett County were anxious for "a revolution under any name."

### Joined by All Types.

The newly formed union quickly attracted to its ranks many who were unemployed and many who had not even tried to "make a crop" for several years. Mill workers, day laborers and men who lived by their wits and by bootlegging illicit liquor into Memphis and Little Rock were accepted as members without question.

They and their followers, white and black, proceeded to go out of their way to arouse the antagonism of the planters and merchants of the community, trampling ruthlessly upon the prejudices which the memories of reconstruction days have left in the minds of the upper-class white families of the South.

Mixed meetings of white and Negro men were held on the main streets of the towns. Economic and social equality of black and white was preached at these meetings, and Negros were introduced as "Mister."

One well-known British woman sympathizer told a mixed meeting that when she returned a few years hence she expected to find Negro and white citizens "living together in peace and harmony," a statement that was generally interpreted as a plea for intermarriage of the two races.

Resentment grew in the towns where the union was strongest, but its leaders were deaf to the advice of their counsel, C. T. Carpenter, a Southern Democrat, who saw where the movement was heading. He pleaded with the organizers to arrange to hold the meetings of Negro and white members separately, but they insisted that there should be no distinctions of race if the union was to be a union except in name.

Doggedly they went about holding their meetings in public places; white members shook hands with Negro members when they met up-on the street, and they began calling each other "comrade" to the amazement and disgust of then planters, who seized upon the race issue as an excuse for the reign of terror which has followed in the wake of efforts to unionize the share-croppers.

### Secrecy in Alabama, Georgia.

A different method was pursued by Communist organizers in Alabama and Georgia. There Communist leaders claim close to 10,000 members, both white and black, but boast that the plantation owners have no inkling yet regarding which of their tenants are members.

Meetings are held secretly, and, according to Albert Jackson, the president of the Communist union, no names are kept on the union rolls. Each member is known by a number. This union has reached a point where it has decided to risk a strike on May 1.

Clay East described the birth of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union as follows:

"It started right after Norman Thomas made his speech over in our county last Summer. I decided right there and then that what we needed was more than a unit of the Socialist party in Poinsett County. We needed a union. And so I wrote to Mr. Thomas and told him what I thought and he agreed with me.

"You know the way I got interested in socialism was sort of funny. I ran a gasoline service station and sitting around waiting for cars to come along I got to thinking of all the waste in having so many gasoline stations when they could all be combined and run by the government.

"One day I walked into the cleaning establishment that my friend Mitchell ran and I told him what I'd been thinking and he said, 'Hell, East, you're a Socialist.' Then he offered to lend me a book about socialism but I wouldn't take it. At that time I thought that Socialists were enemies of the country.

"Then one day he left a book about socialism at my place and I started reading it when I didn't have anything else to do. The first thing I knew I was converted and Mitchell and I decided to form a unit of the party.

"At first the other people in the town thought it was a joke. They didn't think so after the union was started, though."

### Reprisals After a Time.

For a time the union was allowed to proceed with its organization work without molestation. Then, as it became more assertive, reprisals were begun. There were evictions outbreaks of violence against the organizers, and meetings were broken up by planters and riding bosses encouraged by the peace officers of the five counties in the trouble zone, Poinsett, Mississippi, Craighead, Cross and Crittenden.

What really brought the storm about the union members' heads, however, was the attention the unrest was attracting outside the State. This was especially true after the union engaged counsel to test the rights of the share-croppers in the courts, and after repeated protests to Washington had brought investigators into the field.

One thing which stirred up resentment against "outside agitators" more than anything else was the trip which white and colored members of the union made through Eastern States in quest of funds for the share-croppers' fight.

The Associated Press brought back to Arkansas reports that they were being entertained at Mr. Thomas's home in New York and other reports of their activities indicating that they were telling some pretty tall tales about conditions in Arkansas.

One of the stories they were reported to have told was that the share-croppers of Arkansas were so poor that some of them were killing their hound dogs and eating them. This correspondent has seen many instances of abject and dire poverty in the rich cotton lands of Arkansas, but he has yet to find any instance where a share-cropper, or any one else, for that matter, has been forced to such extremities in these days of government relief.

It is true that last January, when the State's finances were at a low ebb, the relief agencies broke down. Then it was necessary for all those in the county who were dependent on government relief to go to Harrisburg, the county seat, to get their dole.

For many this meant a hike of twenty miles or more. It was a common thing at that time to see a coatless man in overalls trudging along the road with a sack of flour over his shoulder and a chunk of salt meat under his arm.

### Liquor Tax an Aid.

A. C. Spellings, farm manager for Chapman-Dewey Lumber Company, one of the largest plantation owners in the county, said that in January and February he often counted as many as 150 men and women walking to and from Harrisburg.

Now that the State is collecting a tax on liquor sold within its borders, it is able to provide its share of relief and there is less suffering and hardship in the county. Many are hungry but there is no reason for any one starving.

Many, like Mr. Spellings, who realizes that the system of share-cropping leaves much to be desired, feel at the same time that radical agitators from the North and East have presented an unfair picture of conditions in the cotton-growing States.

It is true, they admit, that some landlords cheat their tenants; that the average share-cropper almost never gets out of debt, and that many live in a manner so far below the accepted American standard of living there is virtually no ground for comparison.

The average share-cropper, they say, will spend the last cent of cash he gets for his crop for a second-hand automobile and fall back upon his landlord for credit to tide him over until he makes his next crop.

This is true. In the ginning season the second-hand automobile dealers of Memphis take every car that will move under its own power to the cotton fields of Arkansas and it is a poor year when any return to the city.

Even the planters agree that the share-crop system of operating the big plantations is a system conducive to thriftlessness. There is little incentive for a man who may be asked to move on after his crop is in to keep his temporary home in repair. Nor is it easy for a man who has lived on credit for six months of the year to spend the only cash he has seen with frugal thrift.

# NEW TENANT GROUP OUTLINES PROGRAM

Commercial Appeal

## Hopes To Obtain "Honest Deal for the Sharecropper"

Memphis Tenn.

8-1-35

WYNNE, Ark., July 31.—(AP)—Jess Cook said here today that the recently organized Tenant Farmer and Labor Co-operative Union of America, of which he is acting secretary, has for its purpose to "obtain an honest and fair deal for the sharecropper, tenant farmer and day laborer by peaceful means."

Cook said the new organization now has only 27 members, all residents of Cross County, but that plans called for enlarging the movement to cover Eastern Arkansas.

"This union is not sponsored by any radical political group," the secretary asserted. "We want to get a fair deal and will co-operate with landowners and others in every way."

Cook said the organizers of the union formerly were members of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union which attracted considerable attention several months ago.

He stated that the new union is not in opposition to the southern tenant farmers' group, and said that since headquarters for the latter had been established in Memphis that little attention was paid to its Arkansas members.

He listed the aims of the new union as representation on all boards of control designed to aid agriculture; to evictions from land and that no discrimination be allowed on account of membership in an organization of the workers' choosing; free schools and transportation for students, right of all farm workers to organize; decent wages, hours and condition for all farm labor; contracts calling for adequate cash during the farming season at a legal rate of interest with privilege of trading where the worker desires, and the right to sell cotton at market price to whom the members desire.

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**Quite Natural**

## Present Share Crop Arguments

Ward Rodgers (left), alleged agitator, and Vernon Paul, plantation owner, represented the pro and con of the sharecropper-landlord controversy at a mass meeting of members of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union at Parkin, Ark., yesterday. —Associated Press Photo

## Maybe We'd Better Look Around, Anyway!

# SHARECROPPERS IN ARKANSAS APPEAL

### Farm Workers 'Investigated' By Woman AAA Envoy; Grievances Aired

MARKED TREE, ARK., Jan. 29.—(AP)—The sharecroppers—men once described by Norman Thomas, Socialist Party leader, as "forgotten men," living in conditions "worse than peonage," carried their grievances to the Government here today.

The workers from the east Arkansas farms took their complaints and affidavits to the temporary office in which Mrs. Mary Connor Myers, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, is conducting an investigation at the direction of Henry A. Wallace, secretary of agriculture.

In conformity with her announced policy, Mrs. Myers revealed nothing concerning what she heard. Her report will go to Washington shortly.

The Southern Tenant Farmers Union, and sharecroppers not identified with the union, have complained to Washington that scores of sharecroppers have been evicted by the Arkansas landlords, some because of their membership in the union, others because of their insistence on sharing Government parity payments under the cotton acreage reduction contracts with the Government.

Meantime, Ward H. Rodgers, college graduate, who lost his job as a Federal Emergency Relief Administration worker following his arrest and conviction of a charge of anarchy, remained in Marked Tree awaiting efforts by friends to secure his reinstatement.

His appeal to Circuit Court from a six-months jail sentence and $500 fine imposed by a magistrate's court jury here last week will be heard in March. He is under bond.

The State charged that Rodgers tried to incite farm workers to riot in an address to a meeting of white and negro sharecroppers. Rodgers insists he spoke to planters on the outskirts of the crowd, warning them "these people must be fed."

The Arkansas Supreme Court has been asked to review the action of a lower court which recently, on jurisdictional grounds, declined to rule on the application of a number of sharecroppers for an injunction prohibiting landlords from evicting them in the face of Government acreage reduction contracts. In another county four union organizers have been charged with obtaining money under false pretenses.

County officials and planters blame "outside agitators" for the discontent in east Arkansas.

The sharecropper system dates back to the close of the War Between the States. Under the system, the farmer supplies land, supplies, equipment and cabins to the sharecropper, and they share the result of the harvest.

Disagreements over yearly or biennial accountings have been frequent, the sharecroppers complaining they never have anything left after the settlements which include payments to plantation stores for food obtained on credit during the year.

# He Called Race Men 'Mister'

MARKED TREE, Ark., Feb. 1.—Ward H. Rodgers, FERA teacher and an official of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, is the latest victim of the cotton planters in their fight to destroy this rapidly growing union of share croppers.

A jury of [illegible] convicted Rodgers of "anarchy" on Jan. 21 at Marked Tree, Arkansas. In proof of "anarchy" the prosecutor cited:

That Rodgers had organized Negroes as well as white sharecroppers."

That he had "called Negroes Mister."

That he had said "relief for tenant farmers will not come until the United States government abolishes the plantation system."

The case will be appealed to the Arkansas circuit court, C. T. Carpenter, defense attorney announced. At present Rodgers, unable to furnish $3,000 bond, is held in the Harrisburg, Ark. jail.

A nation-wide defense committee to aid Rodgers is being organized by the Socialist Party, according to Paul Porter of Chicago, the party's national labor secretary. Norman Thomas will head the committee.

Thomas has already telephoned from New York that defense funds are being collected for the court appeal. Thomas later will visit Tennessee and Arkansas to address share croppers mass meetings. On his visit to Tyronza, Ark., last winter he helped organize the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, which has since enrolled hundreds of the ensiaved Race and white cotton farmers.

Arkansas.

Agriculture - 1935
Labor Conditions.

## Arkansas Croppers

ROOSEVELT and his agents are rapidly learning that the sharecroppers and tenant farmers in the South will not take his A.A.A. crop destruction program lying down.

Already mass demonstrations and strike preparations are taking place with Negro and white croppers uniting to defend their homes and their families.

In Alabama and Arkansas, this mass resistance to being driven off the land by the landlords has been met with terrorism and lynch threats by the landlords and local officials.

Organizers have been arrested, and one of the active Arkansas leaders, Ward H. Rodgers, a Socialist, is now in jail, seized when he tried to give a report of the delegation that went to see Secretary of Agriculture Wallace.

The Arkansas croppers are being seized "for subversive activities."

This shows that all militant workers and farmers, fighting for their daily welfare, are immediately menaced by the charge of "subversive activity" now being used to attack the Communist Party.

The workers and farmers, Socialist and Communist, must unite in defense of the harrassed croppers.

## FARM UNION ORGANIZER TO FACE ANARCHY TRIAL

MARKED TREE, Ark., Jan. 20.—(UP)—Ward Rodgers, organizer for the "Southern Tenant Farmers' Union," will go on trial here tomorrow charged with anarchy. It is a misdemeanor, carrying a maximum sentence of six months in jail and a possible $100 fine.

Rodgers, arrested while addressing a meeting of share-croppers last week, also is charged with "attempting to overthrow the government," a felony. He will be tried later on that charge.

## U. S. WILL TAKE HAND IN SHARECROP MUSS

### Cummings Aide Starts Acreage Pacts Check

### RODGERS STILL IN JAIL

### College Graduate Faces Marked Tree Trial Monday—Labor Chief Blames Civil War System

Another governmental agency—the AAA—took a hand Saturday in the Eastern Arkansas landlord-sharecropper controversy over alleged evictions, discrimination and non-payment of lease parities that was climaxed in the arrest of a Marked Tree WPA school teacher on charges of anarchy and attempts to incite riots.

The AAA investigation, which will be conducted by Mrs. Mary Conner Myers, special assistant U. S. Attorney General, will be confined to a probe of alleged breach of the governmental acreage agreements by plantation owners and landlords.

Mrs. Myers said last night that Memphis would be her headquarters. She planned to attend the trial of the teacher, Ward H. Rodgers, 24, Vanderbilt graduate, at Marked Tree tomorrow.

"I will take no part in the trial, of course," Mrs. Myers said, "but it will give me an opportunity to contact tenant farmers who doubtless will attend."

Mrs. Myers added she was not interested in the supposed socialistic activities of some members of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union.

**Bail Is Reduced**

"Our Washington office has received complaints from sharecroppers who claimed that they were evicted in violation of the rental contract and that they had not received their share of the parity payments that the government made the landlords in the acreage reduction campaign," Mrs. Myers said.

Until she reached Memphis and began her investigation in Marked Tree, Harrisburg and Tyronza communities, Mrs. Myers declared she had heard no complaints that landowners were discriminating against members of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

"All complaints that I receive will be fully looked into. I expect to be several weeks on this job. The charge has been previously made by sharecroppers that other government agents merely made a superficial investigation of the situation," she said. "I want to get to the bottom of it."

Young Rodgers, who was held at Jonesboro under $3,000 bond following his arrest, gained a reduction of bond at a habeas corpus hearing yesterday on two felony charges of intimidation and conspiracy to usurp government. Bond in each case was fixed at $1,000 and was made by friends of Rodgers.

The hearing tomorrow will be on the other two charges of anarchy and using profane and abusive language, charges on which bond was denied.

**Malcom Blames System**

Jonesboro authorities charged he had referred to "mob action" at a tenants' meeting. Rodgers denied any intent to inflame the crowd.

"I was tired of hearing stories from scores of sharecroppers who came to me and said they were unable to get on relief due to their membership in the Southern Farmers Tenant Union or the Socialist party."

H. C. Malcom, state deputy commissioner of labor, said at Little Rock yesterday that most of the unrest was traceable to misunderstanding of the government crop control contracts.

He said he had made an investigation into cotton contract payments in the area last fall and that his department had setled 'hundreds of cases where there were misunderstandings," adding:

"I did not find a sharecropper who understood the acreage control act."

Malcom said the problem simmered down to the "landowner-tenant-commissary" system developed after the Civil War.

"It has grown into a vicious thing," he said. I believe the landowners realize the system is wrong. Many are trying to do something about it. However, the government's new crop control function has provided the first real checkmate on the system."

"In my investigation, I found many tenants who thought they could sell their crop without settling accounts at the commissary or with the landowner. That of course was not possible because the landowner had advanced the money and furnished the land to produce the crop. There was a general feeling of confusion. Neither the landowners nor the tenants fully understood the whole setup."

"In Crittenden County," he said, "this department collected about $1,000 for the sharecroppers. We stepped into these cases at the request of tenants who were confused about the settlements. We have also had some letters of complaint about threatened evictions from land and in these instances we have stepped in and secured settlements by clarifying misunderstandings.

"We were not asked to act by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. I had occasion to make some inquiries about this organization, which apparently has a large membership. It was my conclusion from examination of union records, that the organization was associated with the Socialist party."

Differences between large landowners and their tenants in Eastern Arkansas have been sporadically publicized for years, but State Deputy Commissioner of Labor Malcom said at Little Rock today that most of the current unrest in the area was traceable to misunderstanding of the government crop control contracts.

He said he had made an investigation into cotton contract payments in the area last fall and that his department had settled "hundreds of cases where there were misunderstandings," adding:

"I did not find a sharecropper who understood the acreage control act."

Malcom said the problem simmered down to the "landowner-tenant-commissary" system developed after the Civil War.

"It has grown into a vicious thing," he said. "It has developed practices that will have to be stopped. I believe the landowners realize the system is wrong and that many are trying to do something about it. However, the government's new crop control function has provided the first real checkmate on the system."

## ARKANSAS FARM DECISION SOUGHT

### High Court Opinion Awaited By Sharecroppers And Planters

MARKED TREE, ARK., Jan. 22.—(AP)—The East Arkansas "planter-sharecropper" controversy was at a temporary standstill tonight pending developments in two court cases.

Ward H. Rodgers, 24-year-old Federal relief educator, a socialist and opponent of the "plantation system" of farming, remained in the Poinsett County Jail at Harrisburg in default of a $1,000 appeal bond following his conviction in a magistrate's court here yesterday on a charge of anarchy.

And as members of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, which claims a membership of 4,500 in 25 northeast Arkansas chapters, sought to finance Rodgers's bond, they anxiously awaited an Arkansas Supreme Court decision on a suit filed by a group of sharecroppers against Hiram Norcross, a Poinsett plantation owner.

C. T. Carpenter, attorney for the sharecroppers, and counsel for Rodgers, tonight explained that this suit is one filed in chancery court by former tenants of Norcross, charging that they had been evicted from their homes in violation of the Government's cotton acreage reduction contracts.

Chancellor J. F. Gautney ruled that he had no jurisdiction in the case, and an appeal from his decision was taken to the State Supreme Court. Carpenter described the suit as a "test case."

Rodgers's conviction yesterday grew out of alleged remarks he made against planters. He was sentenced to six months in jail and fined $500.

## RODGERS FREED OF ALL BUT ANARCHY CHARGE

### Norman Thomas Offerc ERA Instructor Aid in Appeal

### FAVORED RACIAL EQUALITY

### Prosecutor Fred Stafford Says He Considers Convicton a Victory for State—U. S. Loses, But Takes No Part

By United Press

MARKED TREE, Ark., Jan. 22.—The state of Arkansas today abandoned its grave charges against Ward Rodgers, 27, federal ERA instructor, who was jailed for making a speech to sharecroppers, in which he allegedly offered to lead a mob against oppressive plantation owners.

Rodgers was found guilty in justice of peace court yesterday of anarchy, a misdemeanor, and sentenced to six months in jail and fined $500.

Other charges, including breach of the peace, conspiracy and intimidation, were nolle prossed today on recommendation of Prosecutor Fred H. Stafford.

"We do not want Rodgers to feel he is being persecuted, as he says he is, so we are dropping the three charges," Stafford said. "We consider Monday's conviction a victory for the state."

Rodgers has been in this section six months, helping organize the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. Stafford charged he was a Communist. "He is advocating racial equality here in Arkansas and I am against it," he said.

**Offers Aid for Appeal**

Socialists were aroused over the case and offered to raise a defense fund for Rodgers. Norman Thomas, Socialist leader, visited this section last year and deplored the plight of sharecroppers under the New Deal. Thomas has wired Rodgers an offer of aid in appealing his conviction.

Rodgers contended that tenant farmers were being evicted by plantation owners in violation of the cotton acreage reduction agreements. Witnesses at his trial testified that he told a crowd: "I could lead a lynch mob against those plantation owners—I wouldn't like to do

it, but I could lynch every one of them in Poinsett County."

C. E. Carpenter, Rodgers' attorney, said he would appeal the anarchy conviction to circuit court. The federal government took no part in the case, although Mrs. Mary Connor Myers of the AAA legal staff, watch the trial. She was sent here by Secretary of Agriculture Wallace to investigate sharecroppers' conditions.

# 'ANARCHIST' WILL APPEAL DECISION

## Socialist Leader, Students Back Young Champion Of Sharecroppers

MARKED TREE, Ark—(AP)—Opponents of the South's "plantation system" Tuesday rallied to the support of a young college graduate and federal emergency relief administrator instructor, convicted here Monday night of a charge of anarchy growing out of an alleged oral attack on Poinsett County landlords.

Norman Thomas, Socialist party leader, and students of Commonwealth College, Mena, (Ark.) cooperative school, promised to aid Ward H. Rodgers, 24-year-old Vanderbilt graduate and former Boston University divinity student, in carrying his announced appeal to the Circuit Court.

Charged by the state with appealing to members of the Southen tenant farmers union to "overthrow the government," young Rodgers was found guilty by a Magistrate's Court jury Monday night of violating the terms of an Arkansas act of 1919. Penalty was set at six months in jail and a fine of $500.

Deputy Prosecuting Atty. Stafford, describing the verdict as "substantial," Tuesday moved to dismiss three other charges pending against Rodgers—using profane or abusive language, conspiracy to usurp the government, and acts to intimidate.

Promising to help raise a defense fund, Thomas announced Monday night from New York he considered Rodgers' conviction "far too important a case to be left to a justice of the peace's jurisdiction."

No comment was forthcoming Tuesday from Mrs. Mary Connor Myers, Agricultural Adjustment Administration attorney, who sat in the courtroom during the trial.

The plantation "sharecropper" system of farming dates back to the close of the War Between the States when landowners found themselves without the services of slaves.

The Southern Tenant Farmers Union, of which Rodgers is a member, has complained of the eviction of sharecroppers in alleged violation of the contracts. Planters say there is no actual dissatisfaction among "the real workers," but that complaints have been agitated "by outsiders anxious to stir up trouble."

Addressing a recent meeting of white and Negro sharecroppers at Marked Tree, Rodgers was quoted by the state as saying "relief will not come until the government of the United States abolishes the plantation system."

"If these conditions go on," he allegedly continued, "people will be killed, if I am called on to lynch people in this county. . . . I could lead a lynch mob. I don't want to do that."

The defense did not introduce a witness, but Atty. C. T. Carpenter argued "when it's boiled down, we find that my client simply is guilty of indiscretion, and not anarchy. He simply got hot-headed and outspoke himself."

# *RODGERS FINED AND SENTENCED TO SIX MONTHS*

## 24-Year-Old College Graduate Is Accused Of Inciting To Riot

## NORMAN THOMAS OFFERS SUPPORT IN COURT FIGHT

MARKED TREE, ARK., Jan. 21.—(AP)—A 24-year-old college graduate and Federal Emergency Relief Administration worker who had attacked the East Arkansas sharecropper system and who was accused of trying to incite farm workers to riot, was convicted in a justice of the peace courtroom here tonight of anarchy and sentenced to serve six months in jail, and pay a fine of $500.

Ward H. Rodgers, the State charged, told a recent meeting of white and negro sharecroppers here that "relief will not come until the government of the United States abolishes the plantation system."

"If these conditions go on," the State quoted Rodgers as saying, "people will be killed—people will be killed if I am called on to lynch plantation owners in this (Poinsett) County . . . I could lead a mob. I don't want to do that, but gentlemen, if these people are not fed I will lead that lynch mob and lynch every plantation owner in Poinsett County."

Attention was focused on East Arkansas a number of months ago when Norman Thomas, Socialist party leader, visited this area and talked with the sharecroppers, whom he afterwards described as "the forgotten men of the present administration."

The Southern Tenant Farmers Union, an outgrowth of Thomas's visit, has repeatedly complained to Washington, that tenant farmers are being illegally evicted in violation of cotton acreage reduction contracts, and that planters have failed to provide for tenants thus evicted from the lands.

It was at a meeting called to hear the reports of a committee which visited Washington that Rodgers spoke. Other speakers forecast a government investigation of every phase of the acreage reduction contracts. They said that the sharecroppers throughout the years have been denied the living that they have earned, that they have been forced to trade at plantation stores and that with their meager earnings from crop-sharing, the tenant farmers have been unable to provide themselves with clothes, schooling and the necessary food.

Rodgers's arrest followed an address he made in Marked Tree last week to a meeting of white and negro tenant farmers. The State charged he made inflammatory remarks to the farm workers.

Three other charges will be nolle prossed when they are called on Magistrate J. C. McCroy's docket at 9 a.m. tomorrow, Fred H. Stafford, deputy prosecuting attorney, said tonight following the verdict, which he described as "satisfactory."

These charges, "acts of intimidation, conspiracy to usurp the government, and using abusive or profane language," along with that tried by the jury before the magistrate today, were filed last Tuesday following a speech Rodgers made before a group of tenant farmers.

C. T. Carpenter, attorney for Rodgers, said an appeal will be taken to the Circuit Court.

At the same time, H. L. Mitchell, secretary for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, the group before which Rodgers spoke, announced that Norman Thomas, Socialist party leader, had telegraphed him he was raising a fund "to fight the case through the courts."

Mitchell also said Lucian Koch, of Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark., had informed him that a party from that college will come here tomorrow to "assist in the case."

The defense did not introduce a witness today.

The State offered as evidence a stenographic report of Rodgers speech.

In argument, Carpenter said his client might have committed an indiscretion but that he was "not guilty of anarchy."

No trouble occurred, but at one time during the address of Stafford to the jury, he described Rodgers as an outsider and said the FERA worker "called negroes mister," and that he, Stafford, didn't want to associate with him.

"He wouldn't want to associate with you," said a man in the courtroom. The man was removed by a deputy.

# In Anarchy Trial

H. L. Mitchell, left in the upper photo, secretary of the Tenant Farmers Union, sat by Ward H. Rodgers, (right) FERA teacher accused of anarchy, during the trial of Rodgers at Marked Tree yesterday.

C. T. Carpenter, attorney for Rodgers, and Mrs. Mary C. Myers, of the staff of the general counsel of the AAA, are shown in the lower picture.

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# RED FLAG SPREADING, PROSECUTOR CHARGES

## Tampering With New Deal in South, Stafford Says

## LETTERS MADE PUBLIC

## University of Tennessee Will Not Make Issue of Political Beliefs of Amberson, Administrative Officer Says

Radical workers fomenting trouble among southern tenant farmers, particularly in Arkansas, are spreading their propaganda in various guises through luncheon clubs and schools, and are tampering with 'New Deal" activities as well, Fred H. Stafford, deputy prosecuting attorney at Marked Tree, Ark., charged yesterday.

Mr. Stafford made public several letters he says were found in possession of Ward H. Rodgers, former ERA worker, recently convicted in Poinsett County of anarchy.

**Follows Publication**

One letter declares that Socialist doctrines were well received when presented by a friend of Rodgers before the Civitan Club in Little Rock. Another refers to H. L. Mitchell of Tyronza, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, Inc., which Mitchell aand Rodgers have been organizing, as having a full time job as a result of which "things might happen." Still a third letter from Rodgers himself advocates a union of Communist and Socialist efforts to organize a sharecroppers' union.

These letters were revealed by Mr. Stafford following publication in The Commercial Appeal yesterday of other missives of a similar nature which linked instructors in two Memphis schools with the movement, Dr. William R. Amberson, professor of physiology at the University of Tennessee College of Medicine, and Prof. Robert W. O'Brien, teacher at LeMoyne Institute, a negro school.

O. W. Hyman, administrative officer in charge at the university here, made the following statement regarding Dr. Amberson's connection with the movement:

"The University of Tennessee does not take cognizance of the personal political beliefs and private activities of its teachers unless they are subversive of our established form of government or contrary to accepted standards of morality. In his relations to the university Dr. Amberson has shown himself a capable professor of physiology and a man of high moral standards."

Mr. Hyman said that he does not intend to conduct any investigation into Dr. Amberson's ativities. Dr Amberson's only comment was "I have nothing to say."

From Frank Sweeney, president of LeMoyne, came this statement last night:

"To use the test of religious or political belief as to a teacher's fitness has always been considered unAmerican and I subscribe to this but I certainly believe also that if a man uses his political or religious views as propaganda in the classroom, he is no longer capable of objective thinking and therefore no longer qualified to be a teacher. Thus far, however, I have been unable to find proof that Mr. O'Brien has done this.

**Opposed to Communism**

"I am absolutely opposed to Communism and I mean to see to it in the future, as I have in the past, that LeMoyne Collegeis not a party to nor can it be used by any elements hostile to our American form of government."

The reference to the Little Rock Civitan Club came in a letter to Rodgers from J. Austin Beasley, described by Mr. Stafford as an ERA worker in Little Rock.

"I made a talk before the Civitan Club last week and gave them small doses of socialization of industry and did they eat it up," says Beasley's letter, which bore the salutation "Dear Ward."

"They allowed me 20 minutes as it is a luncheon club and must dismiss at a certain time, and then voted me an additional 15 minutes twice because they were interested in what I said. Other clubs have asked for me.

"Luck to you and don't stop preaching the gospel according to Marx."

**Hears From Party Leader**

The intimation that Mitchell has a paid job as organizer of the tenant farmers' union came in a letter to Rodgers from Clarence Senior, of Chicago, executive secretary of the Socialist party.

"Glad to know you are teaching members of the STFU," the letter says, STFU obviously meaning Southern Tenant Farmers Union according to Mr. Stafford. "I hope that with Mitchell on full time some things will happen.

"One of the students from Commonwealth was in this morning. His report of Williams' attitude is rather discouraging." )Williams is said by Mr. Stafford to be an Arkansas Socialist leader.) "He says that Williams covers up the fact that he is a Socialist and plays around with the Communists. I agree with you as to the necessity of giving him some active work to do, but certainly it should be under careful supervision so that we know he is helping the party instead of just bringing in more trouble in the form of Communist 'innocents' organizations.

"Edgar Clemons, the state secretary, and Siegfried Ameringer, manager of the Guardian, both should be written about the possibilities of using Williams.

"At the present time at least the national office could not help with finances. It's sad but true that the financial situation hasn't improved. In fact it's got worse instead of increased activity and increased membership. It's no secret, of course, that the New York group, at least in so far as it is represented by the Jewish Daily Forward, is sabotaging attempts to raise money.

"Fraternally, Clarence Senior, Executive Secretary, The Socialist Party of the United States of America."

**Wrote on Jan. 12**

Parts of the letter which Rodgers wrote Jan. 12, 1935, to Secretary Senior in reply were revealed by Mr. Stafford as follows:

"Dear Clarence—I am sorry to hear that a student at Commonwealth has made a discouraging report. I have met a few of the students there and was not at all impressed with them, the SP students." (SP and CP refer, respectively, to Socialist Party and Communist Party, according to the Marked Tree prosecutor.) However, there is a group there now that has possibilities, I think.

"As to this Williams working at a meeting supporting the unemployment insurance congress, which means the bill that the CP has been pushing, I might say that the bill was indorsed by the State Federation of Labor. If the A. F. of L. is a 'Communists Innocents' organization that the SP members are not supposed to work with, it is news to me.

"I organized an SP local last Sunday at Jonesboro. Mitchell will send in a report as soon as he gets back. Very busy this week-end. Central council meeting of the STFU, trip to Jonesboro tonight and Memphis Sunday.

# REDS AND SOCIALISTS LINKED IN EFFORT TO BAND FARM WORKERS

## Letters Show Ward Rodgers Active Agent of Higher-Up Planners

## PROFESSORS HERE NAMED

## Amberson and O'Brien Aid Share Cropper Union

## RACIAL LINES ARE DRAWN

## White and Black Meetings With Eastern Radical Support Sponsored for Drive Against New Deal, Owners

Evidence of a united front by Socialists, Communists and other agitators to stir up trouble among southern tenant farmers, both white and black, has come to light with the arrest in Arkansas of Ward H. Rodgers, whose conviction in Poinsett County of anarchy is the latest angle of the movement. Rodgers is out on bond with the promise of Norman Thomas, national Socialist leader, and the International Labor Defense, a radical organization, that his appeal will be fought through to the higher courts.

The specific offense lodged against Rodgers was his speech to a meeting of sharecroppers that he would help form a mob to lynch every landlord in Poinsett County. But letters, clippings and documents that have been released since the trial show that the movement goes farther than Poinsett County.

Rodgers is a graduate of Vanderbilt University, and studied for the ministry in Boston University. He asked for and was assigned work under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration as a teacher of workers. In order to prepare for this special work he went to the FERA training school at the University of Texas last summer, and began teaching at Tyronza and Marked Tree.

There were 36 young men at the University of Texas in training when Rodgers was there. In a letter Rodgers wrote to a correspondent in another state he says that 'we want revolution under any name. We have no 'patriotic loyalty' to old organizations in the south," and concludes the letter with the statement that "this is the attitude of all 36 of the students in training at the FERA Workers Education School in Texas."

**Letter From Amherson**

The body of this letter is typewritten and signed by Rodgers with a postscript in the same hand as the signature. The letter advocates united action by the Socialist party and the Communist party in the cotton fields, with the assertion that if such action is not taken, the Communists will set up their own union.

Norman Thomas' interest in the Arkansas angle is revealed by a letter to Rodgers from Dr. William R. Amberson of Memphis, a professor in the University of Tennessee College of Medicine. It is dated Jan. 11, four days before Rodgers' arrest at Marked Tree. This arrest followed a meeting of the Tenant Farmers' Union which C. T. Carpenter, the union attorney, said was held for the purpose of receiving reports from a union committee that went to Washington to see Secretary Wallace. On that visit the committee, made up of both negroes and whites, filed complaints against Hiram Norcross and other landlords and plantation owners, alleging a violation of the Cotton Acreage Reduction contract.

That Dr. Amberson had a report of the committee's visit to Secretary Wallace before it was made to the tenants' union is indicated by the letter to Rodgers.

In it Dr. Amberson says: "Carpenter seems to be rather optimistic that Washington is going to do something, but I have no such hope. I think that if Appleby (Wallace's secretary) meant business, an investigator would have been on the scene before now. It looks to me like another one of their feeble efforts. Norman Thomas writes that he will be in Washington on the 18th and will try to see Wallace or Appleby. I have asked Carpenter to give me an up-to-the-minute account of the situation just before that date. I will then wire Thomas a description of the situation. I do not like the looks of the Norcross strategy. It looks to me as if he were

determined to go through with evictions no matter what they cost. tIf hese people have nowhere to go and the local FERA will do nothing I know of no possibility other than to send the people to Memphis. If anw of them some have them get in touch with me either here at the house or at the university."

The letter gives the Amberson home telephone number and that of the University of Tennessee.

**A United Front**

Dr. Amberson signed this letter 'Fraternally yours."

According to one of the documents that came to light in connection with Rodgers' arrest there is a Communist-sponsored "Sharecroppers' Union" in Alabama.

That the Sharecroppers' Union of Alabama and the Tenant Farmers Union of Arkansas are making common cause is hailed as part of the United Front movement, is revealed by a letter of Rodgfers giving the details of the far-reaching plan This plan is sponsored by the national executive committee of the Socialist party meeting in Boston last Nov. 30. Th letteh, dated Jan. 4, is signed by Nyles Horton, member of the state executive committee; Zilla Hawes, southern labor secretary of the Socialist party, and James Dombrowski of the Tennessee Socialist party.

It starts off by saying:

"At a recent United Front meeting held in Chattanooga on Dec. 6 by the Socialists and Communists it was agreed that economic distress in the south under the New Deal increases daily."

Then follows the statement of action of the national committee of the Socialist party and the call to committees of all southern states "to call a special meeting and effect a United Front between the Socialists, the Communists and other working class groups of the state."

Action similar to that taken at the Chattanooga meeting is suggested. This action includes:

"The struggle against war and fascism, against lynching, against the denial of constitutional rights and the disbanding of the Ku Klux Klan.

"Against the New Deal differential in wages and relief for southern workers.

"Campaign to unionize the south and to develop an aggressive rank and file movement in the American Federation of Labor on the basis of equal rights for negroes, and the unity of white and negro workers.

"Support united front action with the International Labor Defense in the struggle to free the nine innocent Scottsboro negroes.

"Campaign against the AAA and the Bankhead Act in the needs of the exploited farm population."

The letter telling of United Front plans in the south, combining Socialists, Communists and "rank and file" members of the A. F. of L., recites, as proof that this action is already under way, the following results:

The Chattanooga conference, the united front action of the joint unemployed demonstration in New Orleans, the beginning of the joint action of the Sharecroppers Union in Alabama and the Tenant Farmers' Union in Arkansas.

A postscript states that Claude Williams of the Arkansas Socialist party, signed the Chattanooga resolutions.

A letter to Ward Rodgers signed "Claude Williams," and written from Paris, Ark., Dec. 24, has a very interesting bearing on the LeMoyne College, a negro institution in Memphis, particularly Professor O'Brien, a white teacher at the negro school. It says:

"Listen Ward—We must use Zilphia Mae Johnson somewhere in the revolutionary movement. She is anxious. Why can't she find a place at LeMoyne College as you suggested. See the O'Briens about what may be done—position as teacher, fellowship in music, anything."

The letter concludes, hoping for victory. The word "Victory" is in capitals and is written with the red part of the typewriter ribbon.

As far back as last October, Dr Amberson and Professor O'Brien were aiding in organizing the Tenant Farmers Union. At the annual meeting of the Tennessee Conference of Social Work, at the Peabody the first week in October, a group meeting of negro problems was to have been included with a professor of Fiske University, a negro school in Nashvilie, in charge He could not be present and the papers said the meeting would not be held. Later, a program was arranged with four or five whites and 30 or 35 negroes present.

Professor O'Brien presided. Dr. Amberson was the chief speaker.

Dr. Amberson said that the bureaus in Washington were working in differtnt ways, "and are headed in different directions. FERA is shot through with liberal and a few radical thinkers. Go to AAA and you find a different condition. There the ones in charge are former plantation owners and some who now own plantations. They are thinking in terms of big cotton grows with little thought of conditions surrounding the people who work on the cotton farms.

"I am told by some of our workers in Arkansas that the colored workers are showing great ability to organize. It is not possible to strike on the farms with anything like the ease that they can strike in industrial plants. Other methods must be devised. We are working on that now."

Professor O'Brien told of the organizations in Tyronza and Marked Tree. "In Arkansas," he said, "in several communities the people of the tw oraces are meeting in separate groups, then these meetings are joined in one bi-racial group for the first time in the history of Arkansas. There is in Tyronza one union of 2,000 members, half of them white, half colored. There are similar groups being organized at Marked Tree. Many of the leaders are college trained white men. When they were told they could not have the use of any building for these bi-racial meetings they said: 'We will meet in the streets.' So they met in the streets, and they have gone out in the country and met in the cotton fields."

Getting back to the union committee's trip to Washington, it developed that Norman Thomas helped to pay the exuenses .A letter to Rodgers from the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, New York office, ssy "$50 sent to Mitchell to take committee to see Wallace." Mitchell is secretary of the union. The letter begins: "Comrade Rodgers," and the letterhead lists Norman Thomas as chairman of the Emergency Committee.

# Agitators Dangerous; Their Counsel Foolish

In the nation-wide adjustments under Mr. Roosevelt's New Deal, the southern tenant problem is receiving foremost attention. It is a serious problem. Its solution may be far off. It may never be solved satisfactorily, but it has been studied and is being studied by thoughtful men of many creeds.

Probably more thought has been given to correction of the evils which result from tenantry by landlords themselves than by any other class. The landlords did not develop the tenant system for themselves. It was thrust upon them by circumstances over which they as a class and as individuals had no control at a time when the South was scourged by selfish interests which neither understood nor wanted to understand conditions peculiar to the South and its people. Relatively, although in different detail, landlords are as much victims of the tenant problem as tenants themselves.

No doubt there can be found here and there, in varying degrees, landlords who abuse tenants. But the landlord class should not suffer from wholesale indictment on this charge any more than all employers of labor should generally be condemned for sweatshop conditions and slums which have existed in factory cities.

In times past, and again today, instigators of movements to arouse tenants and sharecroppers against landowners have shown little or no understanding of the deep-rooted conditions under which tenantry prevails. It is strongly indicated that agitators now employed in bringing negroes and whites together in an organized protest in Arkansas are influenced and encouraged by the same groups who constantly, but with little success, have attempted to arouse factory labor elsewhere into direct action, sabotage and violence. These people are playing with fire in the South. Their methods are to appeal to emotions. The people to whom they address their fiery utterances in the main are little more than children in mental equipment and social experience.

One of the young men now employed in Arkansas, making speeches to mixed races and hurling threats to lynch every landowner, appears to believe that he has been called from on high to right all the ills of humanity. Granting that he may believe himself sincere, he is nevertheless as dangerous in the community as a spark to tinder. Eyes red with fire of zeal, hands shaking with emotion, voice breaking with passion, he cries out for social justice and addresses himself militantly to the salvation of all who are downtrodden. He offers no workable plan. He is indorsed and supported and sponsored by another type, well-bred, well-educated, warmly comfortable and in some stances wealthy, who have looked on the breeding places of social disease and found them foul without wading in to see what caused the foulness.

Then there is another point of view as expressed by Senator Bankhead of Alabama, who has prepared a bill to provide federal loans for tenants of good moral character, and who are dependable in meeting their obligations, to purchase farms. Senator Bankhead may or may not succeed in having his bill enacted by Congress. Nevertheless he is demonstrating and typifying wiser counsel and sanity. It may be that Senator Bankhead's proposal is not the solution we all desire, but it is neither wild-eyed nor dangerous and it has the additional merit of holding out hope to tenants "of good moral character and who are dependable in meeting their obligations" in contrast with the aim of the agitators to welcome all of good or bad moral character, dependable or undependable, who have three dollars per head to contribute to the upkeep and living expenses of the agitator.

**SEBASTIAN JUDGE STUDIES RELIEF STRIKE DECISION**

FORT SMITH, Ark., Feb. 16.—(AP) A veteran judge who blamed in scathing denunciations "outsiders and agitators" for Sebastian county relief labor difficulties, tonight weighed the case of the state against Horace Bryan, 26-year-old labor organizer accused of anarchy.

"In all the years I have lived in Fort Smith," declared Municipal Judge James A. Gallaher in announcing his decision would be delivered Monday, "I do not think I have ever had a case that means so much to so many people."

The trial climaxed a week of unrest that forced the shutdown of all relief activities in Sebastian county, affecting 3,200 workmen, because of alleged intimidation and threats by advocates of a relief strike against reduced wage scales.

Bryan acted as his own attorney, resting his case shortly before noon today. He is charged with "acts encouraging personal or property injury or overthrow of government."

Judge Callahan delivered a bitter verbal attack on what he described as "beef eaters and radicals of Commonwealth College," labor school near Mena now under legislative investigation for alleged communistic activities.

Bryan, former Commonwealth student, argued that the "real issue in this case is the right of the working class to use legal weapons of organized protest and petition."

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# ARKANSAS VIOLENCE LAID TO LANDLORDS

## Share-Croppers Charge They Foment Trouble to Eliminate Any Attempts at Unionism.

## POINT TO PASTOR AS LEADER

## He Organizes Relief for Recipients Who Renounce All Forms of Organization.

*This is the second of a series of articles revealing the economic status of share-croppers in the South under the crop curtailment program of the AAA, written by a* TIMES *correspondent in the field.*

By F. RAYMOND DANIELL.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., April 15.—The city of Marked Tree, a community of about 2,000 inhabitants, half of whom are Negroes, squats among the cotton fields of Northeastern Arkansas about forty miles from Memphis, on the inadequate banks of the St. Francis River. Since the first of the year it has been the scene of much of the mob violence to which, the workers say, the landlords and riding bosses of the big plantations have resorted in their effort to stamp out the seeds of unionism sown among their share-croppers by Socialist organizers.

There on March 25 a band of forty-odd masked night-riders fired upon the home of C. T. Carpenter, attorney for the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union and an old-time Southern Democrat whose father fought with General Robert E. Lee in the Army of the Confederacy. The raid upon Mr. Carpenter's home was the climax to a series of similar attacks upon the homes of Negro members of the union.

On March 30 an armed band of vigilantes mobbed a group of Negro men and women returning home from church, beating several of them with pistol butts and flash-lights. That same night in the neighboring town of Lepanto night-riders shot out all the lights in a Negro church, terrorizing the women and children of the congregation.

Just over the Poinsett County line in Mississippi County is the town of Birdsong, where on March 16 Norman Thomas and a group of his followers were threatened with violence and run out of town.

**Union Meetings Are Halted.**

The whole section has been in the grip of a perfervid hysteria which probably would have resulted in a massacre before this if the union had not heeded its attorney's advice to stop holding meetings and to obey the laws which, he said, have been invoked by the planters and their elected public officials to curb the union, which has a membership of about 4,000, representing about a third of the share-croppers in the region.

The city of Marked Tree is typical of the towns of that part of the country. The tracks of the St. Louis & San Francisco Railroad run along one side of its main street. On the other is a row of some two dozen one-story brick buildings, including the commissary store of the Chapman-Dewey Lumber Company, owners of the largest plantation in Poinsett County.

A. C. Spellings, farm manager for Chapman-Dewey, is a leader in the community life and it is in his office that most of the plans for civic betterment and "such like" are made and perfected.

The most imposing building in town is the First Methodist Church. It is to that church that most of the business men and planters go on Sunday and it is in the basement of that church that the luncheons of the local Rotary Club are held. The pastor is the Rev. J. Abner Sage, who usually can be found in conference with Mr. Spellings at the commissary store, and who has taken upon himself the task of presenting the views of the planters in letters to editors, and especially to United States Senator Joseph T. Robinson.

**He Backs Plantation Owners.**

"Brother" Sage, as he is known to his congregation, has a great deal of sympathy for the plantation owners. Of the share-croppers, he says they are a shiftless lot with only themselves to blame if they are not as well blessed with this world's goods as they would like to be.

He also feels pretty strongly about the way in which Northern organizers prefixed the names of Negroes with "Mister," shook hands with them and "gave them ideas about social equality."

Things had come to a pretty pass, he explained, when he hit upon the idea of forming a cooperative society among the merchants to relieve the unemployment situation, which had become acute and which he recognized as one of the causes of unrest among the share-croppers.

In response to the urging of "Brother" Sage the merchants subscribed cash and credit amounting to nearly $1,000 a month, which was used to put men to work beautifying the town at about $1 a day. The only catch was that the price of help was renunciation of the union.

Mr. Sage, a former teacher of music at Southern Methodist University, spends most of his daytime week-day hours in the Chapman-Dewey store chatting with Mr. Spellings, or in the office of Fred H. Stafford, Deputy County Prosecutor, discussing the "red menace," and laying plans for halting it.

**Pastor Accused of Eavesdropping.**

According to union members, Brother Sage's zeal to help his friends got him into an embarrassing situation a few weeks ago. Driven from the streets of the town and forbidden the use of any building, the union held a meeting in the freight yard.

While it was in progress one of the members heard a rustling noise in a box car, and H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the union, went to investigate. Mr. Mitchell, a white man who ran a cleaning and pressing establishment at Tyronza, near Marked Tree, until his union activities made it advisable to move, asserts that the eavesdropper was "Brother" Sage. The minister, however, denies that he was in the box car.

While "Brother" Sage looks after the spiritual welfare of his flock and Mr. Spellings strives to build a bigger and better community, Mr. Stafford takes charge of the job of law-enforcement.

Since the inception of the union he has made a special study of socialism and communism. He prides himself on having helped inspire a legislative investigation into the work of Commonwealth College, at Mena, Ark., some of whose students recently "poked their noses" into the share-cropper situation.

This investigation disclosed that Lucien Koch, the young director of the college, which is supported in part by the Garland fund, presented "the Communist viewpoint" to his students, that he regarded all flags merely as symbols, and that he did not know a great deal about the estate of matrimony in Soviet Russia.

Witnesses testified that co-educational swimming in the nude was among the txtra-curricular activities at this institution of learning. A digest of the testimony can be bought for 35 cents, but Mr. Stafford has several copies and is generous about handing them out free.

**Accused of Ignoring Night Ruling.**

A word of disapproval from any of these three, Mr. Spellings, "Brother" Sage or Mr. Stafford, undoubtedly would put a stop to night-riding, the attacks upon Negro churches and all other forms of violence, the share-croppers say. No such word has been uttered by any of them, however, and no arrests have been made.

While there has been no legal action in shootings and night raids on the homes of citizens of his community, Mr. Stafford has been enforcing the law against "anarchy," which provides a fine of not less than $10, nor more than $1,000 and a six months' term in jail for any one advocating the overthrow of the government or the seizing of property without due process of law. It was this law of which Ward H. Rodgers, a young Vanderbilt University graduate and FERA teacher, ran afoul in Marked Tree last January.

Learning that Mr. Rodgers was going to address a meeting of share-croppers, Mr. Stafford sent his secretary to the meeting to record what he was certain in advance would prove damaging evidence. He was right. Mr. Rodgers let eloquence get the better of his judgment and declared that he could lead a mob of share-croppers to lynch every planter in the county.

The young teacher was promptly haled before Justice of the Peace J. C. McCroy and convicted of anarchy by a jury of planters at an impromptu session of court in a store next to a billiard and pool parlor.

**County-Wide Jury Drawn.**

It was a strange trial even for Marked Tree. Sheriff J. D. Dubard rounded up planters from all over the county, although Mr. Carpenter, who defended Mr. Rodgers, asserts that under Arkansas law his client should have been tried by a jury drawn from the township.

Spectators tossed candy to the jurors while the trial was in progress, but when it came time for the jury to deliberate, since there was no jury room, the onlookers were requested to leave. Mr. Rodgers was fined $500 and sentenced to serve six months in jail, but he has filed an appeal.

Bail was provided for him by H. J. Krier, author of articles and short stories for adventure magazines and critical weeklies. He runs a store in Marked Tree, but his business is not too brisk to keep him from amusing himself by writing, editing and publishing a little pamphlet called "Now and Then," in which he voices his opinions.

In the March issue of his pamphlet Mr. Krier, who once was publicity man for the National Democratic Committee, blamed outbreaks of violence in Marked Tree upon "the so-called peace officers, armed thugs and bootleggers and riding bosses."

"They don't bother me any," he said. "I can get away with it because they think I'm a little bit crazy. They think anybody who writes is crazy anyway."

Since the Ward Rodgers episode, the city fathers of Marked Tree have taken steps to guard against a recurrence of such incidents. An ordinance adopted by the City Council declares that an "emergency" has been created by speeches "inimical to the general welfare and calculated to disrupt the peaceful order of the citizens." Therefore, to "protect the peace, health and safety" of the citizens of Marked Tree, it has been declared "unlawful for any person to make or deliver a public speech on any street, alley, park or other public place within the corporate limits of Marked Tree without first having obtained the permission of said city."

Mayor J. E. Fox, who runs a small store in Marked Tree in addition to performing the duties of chief magistrate of the little community, said that the ordinance was adopted expressly to "keep outside agitators" out. It had been invoked to prevent Roger N. Baldwin of the Civil Liberties Union; Howard Kester, a Socialist organizer, and others from addressing meetings there.

"Of course," said Mayor Fox, "the law don't mean that church people can't hold speakin', just the radicals, that's all. I'd give permission to most anybody to hold a street meeting so long as they haven't been mixed up with the union and ain't listed in that 'Red network' book."

After Mr. Rodgers was released on bail he got into further trouble with the law at LePanto. There he was arrested for "barratry," and locked up for three days in a jail which was unheated despite the cold weather of last February. Mr. Stafford explained that the law against barratry was intended to curb shyster lawyers, but he reckoned that under a liberal interpretation it could be made to fit the cases of Mr. Rodgers and others arrested with him. The statute defines a barrator as follows:

"A barrator is one who excites or maintains suits or quarrels either in the courts or elsewhere in the country, a disturber of the peace, who spreads false rumors and calumnies, whereby discord and disquiet may grow among neighbors."

**Leader Explains Town's Aims.**

Sitting in his office in the back of the Marked Tree Bank, with 'Brother" Sage nodding approval and offering a suggestion now and then, Mr. Stafford told of his efforts to protect American institutions as he understands them, from the "Reds" who he thinks threaten them.

"We're on our toes, I'll tell you,"

he said. "Only the other day we intercepted a message sent by Norman Thomas to one of his crowd over in Memphis. It said something about getting all the publicity he could for the union and then went on to say that he had arranged through Rexford G. Tugwell to present the sharecroppers' case to President Roosevelt."

Brother Sage took up the narrative of the intercepted message.

"Yes, sir," he said, "and it wasn't long before we had Senator Joe T. Robinson on the telephone, and after we talked to him Norman Thomas wasn't going to have any interview with the President."

The minister continued:

"We've had a pretty serious situation here, what with the mistering of these niggers and stirring them up to think the government was agoin' to give them each forty acres. Why, it even got so they held a parade here one day of nigger and white share-croppers, and a nigger with a cane tried to hold up a car with a white lady in it.

"I saw one man reach into his hip pocket for a gun and I grabbed him. I don't know, though, but what it would have been better to have a few no-account shiftless people like that killed at the start than to have had all this fuss raised up."

Most of the preacher's fellow-citizens feel the same way about it. Almost every storekeeper in Marked Tree declares openly that he would be glad to help pitch Norman Thomas and his followers into the St. Francis River, and Mr. Spellings told this correspondent that if he were on a jury trying a man for killing "an outside agitator," he would vote for acquittal regardless of the evidence. Marked Tree is typical of the towns which dot the Northeastern Arkansas landscape at infrequent intervals.

Arkansas.

Agriculture - 1935

Labor Conditions.

# Sharecroppers Meet To Outline Policies

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Jan. 31.—(AP)—Denounced by planters and officers of east Arkansas counties as "radicals," organizers of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union held a mass meeting at Parkin, Ark., about 35 miles east of Memphis, this afternoon to outline policies and political alignments.

The meeting, an open field on the edge of Parkin, followed a charge by Fred H. Stafford, deputy prosecuting attorney for Poinsett county, that "radical workers" were "fomenting trouble among southern tenant farmers," and "spreading their propaganda in various guises through luncheon clubs and schools."

Ward H. Rodgers, who was discharged as a federal emergency relief administration instructor, following his arrest and conviction on a charge of anarchy, opened the meeting. He said the use of the public square in Parkin had been denied them.

## Letters to the Editor

**TENANT FARMING**

To The Commercial Appeal:

Your item of Jan. 24, in which Mrs. Mary Connor Myers alludes to the share of the tenant farmer, has the apportionment reversed as to the product. That is, cotton goes one-fourth to the planter and three-fourths to the tenant farmer; while corn is distributed on the one-third and two-thirds basis. Often, however, the tenant farmer will sublet a part of his crop to another, who then becomes the share cropper, and receives one-half of the crop he raises as his pay. The remaining half is divided between the tenant farmer and the planter, or landlord, the deal then being 50-25-25. The "furnish" is never spoken of in the past tense or as having a plural. Mrs. Myers hasn't told the half about the coupons distributed both as credit and as wages. Still, it is only when she calls the croppers' houses "primitive" that we begin to appreciate her tact.

H. J. KRIER.

Marked Tree, Ark.

# TENANTS FIGHT ORDER TO MOVE OFF FARMS

## Landlords' Duties Under AAA Contracts Involved

BLYTHEVILLE, Ark., Jan. 28.—Much litigation has been created here over responsibilities of landlords under AAA contracts.

A number of tenants have refused to quit farms at the request of landlords, even though they had only a contract for the past year, in the belief that certain clauses in the acreage reduction contract, signed by landlords for the 1934-35 period, prevent them from removing any tenant.

As a result a number of unlawful detainer suits have been filed. Tenants have been summarily ejected in several cases with the filing of statutory bond by landlords. In others tenants are attempting to make crops, bonds so they may remain on the land pending outcome of the suits.

Among tenants against whom unlawful detainer actions have been instituted is H. G. Wright who rented 142 acres of school land from Burdette school district No. 35. The school district has perfected bond for Wright's removal.

# TWO ARE BEATEN IN CROPPER STRIFE

## AAA Investigator Ends Survey as Organizers Report Kidnaping.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Feb. 2.—(AP)—Bitterness in the east Arkansas sharecropper war increased today as two young organizers for the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union told a story of having been beaten with pistol butts last night when they were taken from a sharecroppers' mass meeting at Gilmore, Ark., across the Mississippi river from Memphis.

As Lucien Koch, director of Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark., and Bob Reed, a Commonwealth student and a member of the International Labor Defense, told of the assault made upon them, Mrs. Mary Conner Myers, agricultural adjustment administration attorney, concluded her investigation into alleged violations by planters of their acreage reduction contracts, and prepared to leave tomorrow by plane for Washington.

Her brief cases were filled with eviction notices received by sharecroppers, along with affidavits from them, and reports of the controversy as outlined by planters. She declined to comment on her investigation, but was quoted by the Press-Scimitar as saying that her inquiry into alleged illegal evictions had brought to light evidence in support of other violations. The Tenant Farmers' Union complaint to department of agriculture officials led to Mrs. Myers' investigation.

"While I was speaking at the Gilmore meeting," Koch said today, "a man who evidently had been drinking—he was a plantation riding boss—came in and asked what I was talking about. I told him the southern tenant farmers' union. He wont out.

**Hit With Pistols.**

"He came back later with four more men. They grabbed me just as I finished my speech and hustled me out to a car, beating me and kicking me. On the way, Bob Reed came out to see me, and they grabbed him.

They beat us and struck us with the butts of their pistols while we were in the car. Later, a deputy sheriff came by and took us to Marion, Ark., the county seat, where we were questioned about two hours."

Sheriff Howard Curlin said he was investigating the beatings. He said it was up to Koch and Reed to prefer charges.

"Constable H. L. Dickson, of Turrell, brought them into Marion," the sheriff said. "They were not hurt. I questioned them."

**To Probe College.**

Koch said he had a scalp wound and that both he and Reed were bloody. The adjoining Arkansas county of Poinsett, who prosecuted Ward H. Rodgers, discharged FERA worker, who was convicted of anarchy for an address to sharecroppers at Marked Tree recently, said state authorities should investigate Commonwealth College, the co-operative workers' college of which Koch is the head.

"So far as the planter-tenant system is concerned, there should be an investigation into conditions at the college itself."

The sharecropper system in the south dates back to the Civil War's end. Negroes who had been slaves, and white men without money, were hired by planters on a share-the-crop basis. The farmer furnished a cabin, the land, clothes and food for the cropper, and at the end of the year they divided the proceeds from the plot of ground allotted to the cropper. The system is still in existence.

Mrs. Myers conferred yesterday with Hiram Norcross, of Tyronza, Ark., owner of 10,000 acres of land and defendant in a suit brought by the union to restrain him from evicting a number of share croppers. A lower court refused to grant an injunction and the case is now pending before the Arkansas supreme court.

Mrs. Myers' investigation was not concerned with specific alleged violations, but with the interpretations of farmers and share croppers of the acreage reduction contracts.

Share croppers have complained that parity payments from the government for land taken out of production have been withheld from them. Other croppers have complained that landlords have required them to sign contracts relinquishing their rights under the rental agreements.

# TENANTS, OWNERS WAIT AAA REPORT

## Rivals Watch New Bankhead Bill; Cotton Contract Probe Ends

MEMPHIS, Tenn.—(AP)—Officials of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union and East Arkansas Planters were as wide apart as ever Friday as a government investigator prepared to report to Washington her findings in an investigation into complaints that terms of cotton acreage reduction contracts are being violated.

Landlords and tenants also were expected to make known their reaction announcement from Washington that Senator Bankhead (D., Ala.) has prepared a bill to provide federal loans for tenants of good moral character, and who are dependable in meeting their obligations, to purchase farms.

The proposed bill was described in Washington dispatches as aiming a blow at the tenant system of farming.

Senator Bankhead said the bill would establish an agency similar to the Home Owners Loan Corporation, with only tenants eligible for loans, bearing low interest over a period of 30 years. He said purchases of farms would be limited to lands now in cultivation.

At a public meeting at Parkin, Ark., Thursday Ward H. Rodgers, an organizer of the Tenant Farmers Union, and Lucien Koch, director of Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark., cooperative school, denied charges that the union is composed of "Socialists working hand-in-hand with Communists."

Meanwhile, Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Fred H. Stafford, of Marked Tree, Ark., reiterated accusations that the sharecroppers are being "stirred up by radicals."

Sent into East Arkansas by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, of which she is an associate general counsel, Mrs. Mary Connor Myers said her report would come from Washington offices.

Although many tenants and landlords have been at odds several months over division of government premiums for cotton reduction and alleged eviction of sharecroppers as the result of the reduction program, the controversy received impetus with the recent arrest of Rodgers, a young college graduate, on charges of anarchy.

He was convicted in a magistrate's court, fined $500 and sentenced to six months in jail. He has appealed to Circuit Court. A federal relief educator at the time of his arrest, Rodgers has been dismissed and is seeking reinstatement.

# ISSUES EMERGE IN ARKANSAS DISPUTE

## Status Of Share Croppers Topic Of Reports Gathered By AAA

**By ERNEST B. VACCARO**
**Associated Press Staff Writer**

MEMPHIS, TENN., Jan. 30.—(AP)—Are the sharecroppers of East Arkansas "the forgotten men" of the present agricultural program—living in "conditions worse than peonage?"

Or—

Are the men who described their plight in such language "socialists, communists and other agitators," anxious to "stir up trouble among Southern tenant farmers, both white and black?"

These two sharply-drawn issues emerged today from the bitter sharecropper controversy raging in the Arkansas counties across the Mississippi River from Memphis.

Mrs. Mary Conner Myers, agricultural adjustment administration attorney, sent into the South by Henry A. Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture, to investigate complaints of illegal evictions of sharecroppers, has been hearing reports and taking affidavits for several days. She is expected to wind up her work this week and report to Washington.

**Appeal Date Set**

In the meantime, word was received from Little Rock today that the Arkansas Supreme Court has set March 11 for the submission of an appeal by 23 Poinsett County sharecroppers from a lower court decision denying them an injunction against Hiram Norcross, a landlord, to restrain Norcross from evicting them from lands rented to the Government. The lower court held it was without jurisdiction to pass on the appli-

cation.

The sharecroppers, supported in the suit by the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, labeled by Poinsett County officials as a socialist organization, working hand in hand with the communists, contend that Norcross has threatened to evict them in violation of acreage reduction contracts in which he allegedly agreed to continue his tenants in their occupancy of houses on his farm.

The suit was filed, the plaintiffs alleged, after the Poinsett County AAA committee declined to help them, and they were threatened with going without food and shelter.

A central figure in the controversy is Ward H. Rodgers, young socialist, and college graduate, whose dismissal as a Federal Emergency Relief Administration worker, followed his arrest on a charge of anarchy.

**Rodgers Quoted**

Rodgers, the State charged, made a speech at Marked Tree, Ark., in which he offered to lead a mob "to lynch every plantation owner in Poinsett County."

His appeal from a six months sentence and a $500 fine, imposed by a magistrate court jury, will be heard in March in Circuit Court.

Rodgers, a visitor here today, has no comment to make on a story published by The Commercial Appeal revealing purported correspondence linking him with radical movements, other than to say "there are no communists in the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, and the union is no political party, but a labor union in which both Republicans and Democrats are members."

"I do not advocate violence; nor have I advocated violence. The remarks I made at Marked Tree were to planters on the outskirts of the meeting, and were intended as a warning to them that the sharecroppers evicted by them would have to be fed."

**Called Radicals**

Poinsett County officials, on the other hand, class the organizers of the union, including Rodgers and H. L. Mitchell of Tyronza, a socialist, as "dangerous radicals," anxious to stir up trouble among farm workers and to promote "racial equality," among the white and negro farmers." The Commercial Appeal brought this side of the picture to light in a story today.

The story linked Dr. William R. Amberson, Memphis, a professor of the University of Tennessee, College of Medicine, with the tenant farmers union, and referred to a letter indicating Dr. Amberson was in communication with Norman Thomas, socialist party leader, who first described the sharecroppers as "forgotten men" on a trip through Arkansas cottonfields several months ago.

Rodgers said today that union members are being denied their parity payments under the acreage contracts unless they consent to leave the farms.

The South's tenant farmer system dates back to the close of the War Between the States. The sharecropper operates the acreage allowed him on a half to half basis-half of the product and proceeds to the sharecropper at yearly settlements from which he pays for his food and clothes and other supplies obtained from plantation stores.

# 'WILL IT WORK' IS RESPONSE TO PROPOSED BILL

## Legislation Approved By Some And Condemned By Others

## PLANTER SAYS TENANTS UNABLE TO HOLD FARMS

MEMPHIS, TENN., Feb. 1.—(AP)—A question—"will it work?"—was the response of the East Arkansas sharecropper country today to the news that Senator Bankhead (D), Alabama, had prepared legislation designed to remedy distressed conditions associated with the South's tenant system of farming.

Senator Bankhead's proposal—loans for tenants of good character with dependable records for meeting their obligations, for the purchase of farms—was approved in principle for some and described as "unworkable" by others, although all were in agreement Senator Bankhead's intentions were good.

Hiram Norcross, of Tyronza, owner of 8,500 acres of land, and now engaged in litigation with the Southern Tenant Farmers Union over the question of evictions, said he had around 170 families on his lands.

"In my experience with sharecroppers," he said, "there is not one in 10, who, if given a farm tomorrow, free of indebtedness, could make a go of it.

"In five years, they would no longer own it."

A somewhat similar view was taken by Vernon Paul, a plantation owner of Parkin, Ark., who said a large majority of the tenants, especially the negroes, do not have the capacity to handle a loan over a period of 30 years, such as the Bankhead plan contemplates.

**Unable to Write**

Paul said many of the sharecroppers are unable to write and that few of them could manage a farm.

He said he knew of no abuse against the croppers by plantation owners, and that the landlords have shown their regard for the workers by feeding, clothing and housing them during years when they have lost money, and many, their farms.

Any program to raise the status of the average sharecropper, he said, will have to be undertaken gradually, over a period of years.

The general idea of Senator Bankhead's plan won the enthusiastic endorsement of Atty. C. T. Carpenter, of Marked Tree, Ark., who said he would like to know more about the bill.

Carpenter is acting as counsel for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, now engaged in controversy with plantation owners and Poinsett County, Arkansas, officials, who accuse the union's sponsors of being "radicals."

"My interest in the union," Carpenter said, "is my interest in bettering the working conditions of sharecroppers. I am acting as counsel for the union in pending litigations. I am a life-long Democrat, a native of Virginia and a former student of the University of Kentucky. I am a wholehearted supporter and admirer of President Roosevelt and of 'the New Deal.'

"It is my firm belief and conviction," he said, endorsing Senator Bankhead's idea, "that the only solution of the troubles is the breaking up of large plantations into small farms which would be owned and occupied by those who cultivate the soil," adding that "it is the only way of restoring that independent country life which has always been the safeguard of the republic."

"The machinery for carrying out this reform should be in the hands of men who are sympathetic and interested in the reestablishment of small homes which will be occupied by the people who own them," and these homes "should never be subject to mortgage or speculation," to prevent them from "again falling into the hands of a few."

**AAA Probe Ends**

Meanwhile, Mrs. Mary Conner Myers, Agricultural Adjustment Administration attorney, is winding up an investigation into complaints by sharecroppers of alleged evictions and other purported violations by planters of acreage reduction contracts.

Ward H. Rodgers, former Federal Emergency Relief Administration instructor, discharged following a conviction of anarchy and now awaiting appeal from a jail sentence, joined with Lucian Koch, director of Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark., and H. L. Mitchell, Tyrona, Ark., Socialist and secretary of the Union, in a statement approving the intentions of Senator Bankhead but doubting the success of the plan.

"We do not believe that 40 acres and a mule is the thing to supplant the present slave system of producing cotton," they said. They advocated "large scale farming on a cooperative basis, with the use of machinery." Titles to the land, they said, should be vested in the sharecroppers under a rural rehabilitation program.

"Plans for reestablishment of a rural population of community farms, if applied to land permitted to grow cotton, would be much better than small scale farming."

# ORGANIZERS FOR TENANTS BEATEN

## Two Men Assaulted On Eve Of End Of Investigation In Arkansas

MEMPHIS, TENN., Feb. 2.—(AP)—Bitterness in the East Arkansas sharecropper war increased today as two young organizers for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union told a story of having been beaten with pistol butts last night when they were taken from a sharecroppers' mass meeting at Gilmore, Ark., across the Mississippi River from Memphis.

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"While I was speaking at the Gilmore meeting," Koch said today, "a man who evidently had been drinking—he was a plantation riding boss—came in and asked what I was talking about. I told him the Southern Tenant Farmers Union. He went out.

"He came back later with four more men. They grabbed me just as I finished my speech and hustled me out to a car beating me and kicking me. On the way, Bob Reed came out to see me, and they grabbed him.

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# MARKED TREE PLANS TO AID UNEMPLOYED

## Farmers, Business Men Form Co-operative Association

Special to The Commercial Appeal

MARKED TREE, Ark., March 2.—Adopting the slogan, "Marked Tree Takes Care of Its Own," 75 tenant farmers, land owners and business men last night formed the Marked Tree Co-operative Association.

Its prime purpose is to find jobs for all unemployed farm labor in Marked Tree and to also find work for other idle classes here.

"Every man who wants to work will be given a job," it was agreed at the meeting.

The Rev. Abner Sage, Methodist minister, was named executive secretary and L. V. Stevens, cashier of the Marked Tree Bank, was elected treasurer of the executive committee, consisting of A. J. Sharpe, J. Shonberger and W. R. Payne.

**Funds Pledged**

Funds were pledged for immediate direct emergency relief for the unemployed. Every person at the meeting pledged from $1 up.

Landowners agreed to increase the number of share-croppers on their farms by at least 10 per cent, or 20 per cent over last year. There is a surplus of workers in Marked Tree, many having accumulated since they came here to pick cotton last year.

It also was emphasized that "floating labor," consisting of transients who do not belong in this community, will not be taken care of in the job-finding program.

**Census Planned**

The association will begin immediately a "census" of unemployed farm and industrial labor.

An office has been opened in the Legion Hut where all unemployed will be required to register.

A picture of farming conditions in this vicinity was given at the meeting. It was said that sharecroppers last year averaged better than $500 return for their work, in addition to rent free. It was said that they average $30 per acre for every acre of cotton planted and cultivated.

Agriculture - 1935
Labor Conditions.

# SEEK NEGRO AGITATOR IN PHILLIPS COUNTY

Commercial Appeal

## Described As Organizer Among Sharecroppers

3-8-35

HELENA, Ark., March 7.—Phillips County officers today were instructed to pick up and question an unnamed negro described by Sheriff F. F. Kitchens as "an organizer" among sharecroppers.

The order was issued after Kitchens, Prosecuting Attorney Charles Straub, and other officers armed was gas bombs had made a hurried trip to Old Town, 10 miles from here, in response to a report that there had been a gathering of white and negro sharecroppers there and some sort of disturbance.

The officers found no gathering and no disturbance.

This county had not previously figured in the tenant-organization movement.

# TENANT UNION MEN DESERT CO-OP JOBS

Commercial Appeal

## For "Official Business" Give Up Marked Tree Work

3-7-35

## AWAIT SHARE CROP VOTE

### Farmers Undecided On Co-operation With Community Employment Association—The Rev. J. A. Sage Explains

Three members of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union at Marked Tree, Ark., given jobs earlier in the week through the newly organized Marked Tree Co-operative Association, quit their jobs yesterday "to attend to union business," the Rev. J. Abner Sage, Presbyterian minister and secretary of the association, said last night.

Among the three was W. R. Timms, secretary of the Marked Tree Community Council, Tenants' Union. He had been on the relief rolls and was without funds, it was reported. Two other union members offered jobs by the association declined to sign application blanks, saying that "this is a free country and we won't sign anything."

**Led by Koch**

Led by Lucien Koch, head of Commonwealth College at Mena, members of the Tenant Union last night were awaiting the result of a poll to determine whether the union would co-operate with the Co-operative Association or refuse to permit its members to accept jobs offered.

The union vote came on the heels of a meeting in the negro lodge hall at Marked Tree Monday night, at which Mr. Sage explained his group's objectives and subjected himself to an hour's questioning. Also attending the meeting were Lucien Koch and Clark Waldron, organizers for the union, and H. L. Mitchell, an official of the union.

**Answers Letter**

Mr. Sage, in answer to a circular letter addressed to the Business Men's Co-operative Association, told the union members that his group could not have a committee deal with a special committee from the union.

"We could not deal with a special committee from the Democratic party, or the Catholic Church, or the Masonic fraternity," Mr. Sage said. "My organization is not the 'Business Men's Co-operative Association, but it is just what the name implies, the 'Marked Tree Co-operative Association,' and membership in it is open to any white citizen, male or female, who is a resident of Marked Tree trade territory. The sole object is to do everything possible to find employment for those of our people who need employment.

"There are no membership restrictions as to lodge membership, union membership, church membership or political party."

The Tenant Union's first legal test will come next Monday when the state supreme court is expected to rule on the plea of 23 sharecroppers that Hiram Norcross, Tyronza planter, be restrained from evicting them.

The Co-operative Association up to last night had received 87 applications for jobs, a few of them being rejected because the applicants were nonresidents. The Chapman & Dewey mill put 22 to work Tuesday from the list of applicants and yesterday a young civil engineer, former member of the Tenant Union, was placed in charge of a crew of 12 to be recruited that will clean up the city streets and help beautify it under the Garden Club's direction. The Chapman & Dewey mill put five more men to work yesterday and a crew of carpenters will get on the job soon to build 10 farmhouses on Chapman & Dewey land.

Planters in many instances are increasing the unmber of their families and certain tenant farmers are voluntarily reducing the size of their cotton acreage in order to give the remainder to needy families.

## Monkey Business

**In an effort to do something for the jobless and, at the same time, show that eastern Arkansas has no truck for agitators and disturbers, landowners and business men of Marked Tree met last week and laid plans for bettering the condition of the tenant farmer. Men were put to work on the streets, others were given jobs by the planters, families that had been run out of the St. Francis bottoms by high water were re-established in their homes.**

**The Rev. J. A. Sage, minister at Marked Tree, is devoting almost his entire time to the work as secretary.**

**Up pop three of the men who were given jobs and announce that they have quit. Their purpose, they say, is that since they are members of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union they have union matters to attend to. It is not of particular moment what the matters are. But the attitude of the workers is of moment, and very serious moment.**

**Frankly, it appears that there is some sort of monkey business going on. It is to be presumed that they were sincere in their demands that they be given some kind of work to support their families. That being true, then their determination to quit comes from the wild ideas of a lot of meddlers who, while ranting about the right of free speech, and the right of free this and that, never see fit to co-operate with a community in preserving the right of a free man to work. A little worthwhile advice from these meddlers would go far towards lightening the burden and solving the problem that, unfortunately, so many honest and trusting people have had thrust upon them since the depression set in.**

**Instead of that, these birds sit back and give out interviews bewailing the horrible plight of Arkansas.**

**The poor man, the unemployed man, in Arkansas is no worse off than his fellow in Massachusetts or California. It is a social condition that was not of anybody's making. It is one of those cycles which, unhappily, upset living conditions and social conditions, leaving those who are hit hardest discontented and rebellious. It is absolutely silly to approach such a situation at such a time by any method other than co-operation. These meddlers should consider themselves fortunate in having a willing and sincere community that will co-operate.**

**They are bringing misery on themselves and more distress to the unfortunate if they fail to co-operate.**

# Thomas Charges He Was Gagged

Commercial Appeal

MEMPHIS, Tenn., March 15.—(AP) With the charge that he was "forcibly prevented" from addressing a meeting, composed largely of negro sharecroppers at Birdsong late today, socialist Norman Thomas tonight sent a telegram of protest to President Roosevelt.

Thomas and members of his speaking party said that they were escorted from the steps of a negro church in the rural community of Mississippi county and that an officer advised them not to speak "because I cannot give you and innocent people protection."

Denied the use of the public square at Marked Tree, Thomas delivered an address from the front porch of a private home there.

Withering comment on "southern hospitality" came from the former presidential candidate as he mounted the porch three blocks from the town square, across a railroad track.

# 500 HEAR THOMAS IN EAST ARKANSAS

Commercial Appeal

## Socialist Leader Opens Drive For Unionization Of Sharecroppers

3-14-35

By PAUL R. BUMBARGER
Associated Press Staff Writer

PARKIN, ARK., March 13.—(AP)—A crowd of 500 persons, about evenly divided between whites and negroes, gathered around a cotton loading platform here late today and heard Norman Thomas open his drive for agricultural unionization support in the sharecropper counties of eastern Arkansas.

Many, mostly the negroes, responded in camp-meeting fashion, clapping hands and shouting "amens" and "that's right" at the climaxes of the socialist leader's address.

"Boy, that's jam up to the bricks," one negro cried as Thomas told his audience: "The only approach is for the workers to organize and stick together."

Thomas, who told Gov. J. Marion Futrell earlier in the day that he had been informed that "conditions (among sharecroppers) are even worse in Alabama and Georgia than in Arkansas," emphasized his belief that "this tenant problem is just a phase of a much larger problem, the general problem of poverty."

The head of the American Socialist Party came here after a conference with Gov. Futrell in Little Rock at which the Governor said no funds were available for the State investigation into the plantation system which Thomas urged.

Driving by automobile through country recently the scene of demonstrations attending the tenant-farmer organization movement, Thomas talked with individual sharecroppers informally and later mounted the cotton loading platform, near a railroad siding, for his address. He left here early tonight for another address at Marked Tree, where Ward H. Rodgers, young FERA schoolteacher, was recently convicted of anarchy after a share-crop-meeting speech.

Reiteratmg socialist principles enunciated in his inaugural Arkansas speech in the capital last night, Thomas criticized Senators Joe T. Robinson and Hattie W. Caraway, of Arkansas, for "inaction," and lampooned Roosevelt "recovery efforts," the Townsend pension plan and Huey Long's share-the-wealth program.

"Gov. Futrell told me," said Thomas, "that some landlords were ruining themselves supporting their tenants. I want to know all about this. If cases like this can be pointed out and supported with evidence, I want to give it all the publicity I can."

Leaving the State capitol with an assertion that "I would choose ten times over to live in the New York slums than in some Arkansas farm counties," Thomas, head of the American Socialist Party, this afternoon traveled through some of the territory recently stirred by tenant organization demonstrations.

He came here to fill a speaking engagement under auspices of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, whose cause he espoused after it had charged mistreatment and evictions of sharecroppers by plantation owners and oppression under the Agricultural Adjustment Administration cotton control program.

Thomas's interview with Gov. Futrell at the State house in Little Rock was a spirited one.

The socialist leader requested both a State investigation of the tenant system and a memorial to Congress for action there.

Banging his desk, the Governor replied the State had no funds for such an inquiry and that he did not propose to tell Congress what it should do."

"There is no money for such an investigation and I believe that it is unreasonable to make such a request when there is no money available," said Futrell.

He asked Thomas why he did not put up the cash for an investigation.

"I should furnish money for the State of Arkansas?" retorted Thomas, smiling.

"Except for scattered instances," Gov. Futrell commented, "I do not believe that conditions are as bad as reported. There is one thing that you do not realize in New York and that thing is that you cannot get by with race equality. Right or wrong, that is the condition. We are willing to give every civil right, but you cannot talk of social equality."

# 'CLOSE CHECK' ON COLLEGE IS URGED

## Arkansas Committee Describes Liberal Teachings As American Right

LITTLE ROCK, ARK., March 11—(AP)—Liberal thought as evidenced at Commonwealth Labor College was described today by a legislative committee which investigated the school as an American right, but the committee recommended "a close check" on the manner in which such liberal thought "is urged to be put into effect."

Activities tending to violence, force or bloodshed, the committee said, should be met with prosecutions under existing laws.

Filing of the investigation report was quickly followed by withdrawal from the House of Representatives of a bill to make court injunctions the State's weapon in fighting communistic activity.

The commonwealth investigators found that the college as an institution had only an academic interest in extreme liberalism but added that some of its 40 students and ten teachers "are committed to the communist theory and their militant activities in fostering, leading and agitating dissention by strikes and otherwise over the State are extremely radical and close to the border line."

Noting that Lucien Koch, the college head, "does not believe in God." and that "the school is agitational rather than educational," the committee directly charged that its attaches had taken advantage of economic conditions "to excite class hatred, breed racial friction and promote domestic violence."

Agitation among Eastern Arkansas sharecroppers and in the movement for recent relief strikes in Western Arkansas were cited as instances.

"They plead for the protection of constitutional right which they are seeking to destroy," the committee commented.

"We recommend a close check be kept hereafter on the manner in which what they advocate is urged to be put into effect by the people, and if such teachings and principles tend to excite the people to overthrow of the present constituted government through violence and force or may reasonably be expected to cause bloodshed, that they be prosecuted under present laws, now in effect."

Taking cognizance of a charge that free love flourished at Commonwealth the committee said:

"Some witnesses have testified about mixed nude bathing parties and other immoral conduct practiced by the students and professors at this college, all of which testimony is strongly denied by the students and professors."

# Letters To The Editor

### AGITATORS? NO SALE

To The Commercial Appeal:

Your editorial, "Agitators Dangerous!" in Sunday's paper was fine. I operated a plantation in Arkansas several years ago and I know it certainly rings true. Arkansas is a wonderful state and has unbounded natural resources and the best people in the world. I know at least 40 planters in the state, and they are all men of high standing as to honesty and integrity. These men, some of them, began their farming operations in the pioneer days. They have worked hard and gone through many hardships to earn what they have.

And to think our own government has sent these carpetbaggers down here to inflame the minds of these poor tenants against their best friends, the planters.

Tennessee and Mississippi should join Arkansas in petitioning Secretary Wallace to recall these agitators and ask him to put a good southern man in their place to help the planters and the tenants settle their differences in an intelligent way. Let us hope that Senator Bankhead will be successful in putting his bill through. In the meantime if this fellow Rodgers keeps flirting with the undertakers

# VIOLENCE FEARED IN 'CROPPER ROW

MARKED TREE, Ark., March 23. (AP)—Demands for federal intervention in the east Arkansas share-cropper controversy to prevent threatened "lynchings" and other violence were made to Washington today as a group of socialist party leaders held a sharecropper rally here.

The national executive committee of the socialist party, in a telegram to President Roosevelt from Buffalo, N. Y., declared the government will be responsible for murder if it refuses to act in the "reign of terror" against the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union in this state.

Before leaving Memphis for Marked Tree for a meeting H. L. Mitchell, Tyronza, Ark., socialist, and secretary of the union, issued a statement in which he said "the terror which has been inaugurated both by the planters and their retainers can be stopped only by federal intervention."

Mitchell and Howard Kester, Nashville, Tenn., socialist, sent a telegram to United States Senator Edward P. Costigan, asking him to introduce a resolution demanding an inquiry in the names of "thousands of homeless, destitute and terrorized share croppers."

"Help us prevent lynching, murder and other violence," the telegram said, adding that the alleged "reign of terror" is being "rapidly brought to a climax" by "armed vigilantes."

Meantime, United States District Attorney Fred A. Isgrig, of Little Rock, announced receipt of a letter from C. T. Carpenter, of Marked Tree, attorney for the union, which inclosed a typewritten threat addressed to W. H. Stultz, union president, who was "run out of Marked Tree" yesterday by a group of planters.

H. Clay East, and Miss Mary Hillyer, of New York city, a member of the League for Industrial Democracy, addressed the meeting, and East said officers warned them to break it up to "prevent trouble." East said they asked the officers for protection and continued the rally, attended by 200 or 300 white and negro tenant farmers.

"After the meeting two carloads of men tried to stop us, but we came here to our attorney's office," East said. He spoke from the office of C. T. Carpenter, attorney for the union.

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"After the meeting two carloads of men tried to stop us, but we came here to our attorney's office," East said. He spoke from the office of C. T. Carpenter, attorney for the union.

## TENANT REPORT SECRET

### Wallace, Davis Refuse to Disclose Findings in Investigation

WASHINGTON, March 15.—(AP)—Despite demands of Norman Thomas and numerous others, the AAA said today that it would not make public the report of Mary Connor Myers, special legal investigator into southern sharecropper conditions.

Hundreds of letters have been received by Secretary Wallace and Chester C. Davis, AAA administrator, urging publication of the report on landlord-tenant relationships in Eastern Arkansas.

Officials said, however, that the report was no more a public document than a report of the Department of Justice, and would not be privileged matter for publication even if given out.

They explained further that it concerned specific complaints that landlords had not fulfilled a section of the cotton reduction contract calling for maintenance of the same number of tenants as they employed before reducing their acreage.

# Sharecroppers In Rally Defy Threat

MARKED TREE, ARK., March 23.—(AP)—In the face of alleged threats of violence, organizers for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union held a rally here late today, after Socialist Party leaders demanded Federal intervention in the East Arkansas sharecropper controversy to prevent threatened "lynchings" and other violence.

The national executive committee of the Socialist Party, in a telegram to President Roosevelt from Buffalo, N. Y., declared the Government will be responsible for murder if it refuses to act in the "reign of error" against the union.

H. Clay East, and Miss Mary Hillyer, of New York City, a member of the League for Industrial Democracy, addressed the meeting, and East said officers warned them to break it up to "prevent trouble." East said they asked the officers for protection and continued the rally, attended by 200 or 300 white and negro tenant farmers.

# Tenant Union Leader Is Warned To Leave

MARKED TREE, Ark., March 22. (AP)—W. H. Stultz, president of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, said today that he found a note on his doorstep this morning, warning him to leave Poinsett county "within 24 hours."

The note, written on a typewriter, was signed with 10 X's, and said: "We have decided to give you 24 hours to get out of Poinsett county."

Stultz took the note to C. T. Carpenter, attorney for the Sharecroppers' Union, who said he advised Stultz to "stand his ground," and that "a man has a right to protect his home."

### SHARE CROPPERS

To The Commercial Appeal:

The most fortunate laborers of the south, and especially of the State of Arkansas, are the share croppers. We know this statement to be true from close observation and actual experience with them. In 1931 a man who stated that he had been an owner of a farm, requested me to permit him to make a share crop on my land. He was dead broke, 48 years old, had no family except his wife. He was given a chance by me. I furnished him team, provender, seed, implements and furnished him with supplies during the year; he made a good crop of cotton but the price was low—about 5 cents a pound; he produced a fine crop of vegetables, canned enough for his use for 1932 and sold enough to obtain supplies for 1932. He is with me yet and last summer I asked him how he was getting along and he stated: "I have two cows and sell butter; have 150 chickens and sell chickens and eggs; have enough meat, lard, vegetables put up and canned to last me for 1935, and do not owe a cent to any one and have enough money to harvest my crop, which when sold is clear profit." He made eight bales of cotton, good corn, hay, etc. He had more money, made by himself, than any mechanic in Brinkley—and not many business men did so well.

If the wild-eyed agitators, nonproducers who pay no taxes nor contribute a cent towards the relief of the unfortunate, come here they will observe many happy share croppers, out of debt and preparing to make good gardens and another share crop.

C. F. GREENLEE.

Brinkley, Ark.

Agriculture -1935
Labor Conditions.

# MARKED TREE RULE MAY BLOCK THOMAS

Commercial Appeal

## Open Air Mass Meeting Plans Undecided

3-15-35

MARKED TREE, Ark., March 14.—(AP)—Norman Thomas' plans for an open air rally of sharecroppers here tomorrow morning ran into a prohibitory city ordinance today, and members of his party said it might be necessary to move the meeting to the outskirts of town.

Memphis Commercial Appeal

The Socialist party leader spoke here last night in Union Hall and afterwards announced plans for tomorrow's gathering on the public square. Marked Tree, however, has an ordinance prohibiting meetings in public places without permission of the mayor, and Mayor J. E. Fox said today he had withheld a decision in the matter.

Thomas, erstwhile presidential candidate on the Socialist ticket, traveled through the sharecropper belt today, charging that "conditions in the cotton country are the worst in the United States."

share-crop plantation problem, offspring of the War Between the States, with radical propaganda.

There were arrests and convictions for anarchy and barratry.

The Gooch bill, to punish sedition with imprisonment up to 20 years, went through the House in less than half an hour. Three weeks ago a Senate committee pigeon-holed it after a stormy public hearing. Senator J. L. Shaver, however, last night had it recalled from the committee, placed it in position for final action.

Describing the measure as "vital to eastern Arkansas," Shaver today awaited his opportunity to call the bill up despite the last minute jam of other business in the fast-expiring session.

Meantime, Acting Director William Cunningham, of Commonwealth Labor College, Mena, Ark., speaking for Director Lucien Koch, who was away in eastern Arkansas, called on all liberal-thinkers to "direct all efforts toward defeating the sedition bill in the Senate."

# NORMAN THOMAS IS IN ARKANSAS FIGHT

## Socialist Leader To Speak For Sharecroppers And Talk To Governor

Democrat

LITTLE ROCK, ARK., March 12.—(AP)—Socialist Norman Thomas came to Arkansas tonight in behalf of the Southern sharecropper white forces in the Legislature grappled over a sedition bill inspired at least in part by the recurrent controversy between sharecroppers and their landlords.

3-13-35

Thomas, once referred to the Arkansas tenant-farmer as "the original forgotten man," scheduled an address here and made plans for a conference with Gov J. Marion Futrell to further the cause of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union which he described as "the only hope of one of the most desperate situations in America."

Demonstrations in eastern Arkansas the past few weeks over the organization movement among the tenant-farmers there brought charges in the Legislature and elsewhere that professional agitators were fanning the flames in the

# THOMAS HECKLED IN ARKANSAS ADDRESS

Democrat

## Socialist Leader Calls Off Rally On Advice Of Deputy Sheriff

3-16-35

MEMPHIS, TENN., March 15.—(AP)—Norman Thomas, socialist party leader came here tonight charging that he was prevented from speaking at a rally of sharecroppers at Birdsong, Ark., late today.

Memphis Commercial Appeal

About 300 persons had gathered in front of a church building to hear Thomas make one of a series of speeches attacking the present system of plantation system of farming.

"As I arose to speak," Thomas said "someone in the audience shouted, 'go tell that to New York.' It was then that an officer advised me not to speak.

"I asked the crowd how many wanted to continue the meeting. Only a few held up their hands."

There was no actual trouble, the socialist leader said.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Hale Jackson said at his home in Osceola, Ark., that "we advised Mr. Thomas to leave because there were only three officers there."

"Soon after Mr. Thomas was introduced and as he was preparing to enter his speech, several persons began heckling him," Jackson said. "I went over to the speaker, told him who I was and asked him if he wanted to go on with the meeting."

Jackson said he advised the socialist leader that there was possibility of trouble and that "three officers can't give adequate protection."

"I explained to Mr. Thomas that we did not propose to arrest him and that he had violated no law," the chief deputy said. "I think he saw it our way and agreed to call off the meeting."

## Socialist Makes Speech From Marked Tree Porch

MARKED TREE, ARK., March 15.—(AP)—Denied the use of the public square, Norman Thomas, the socialist party leader, today delivered an address from the front porch of a private home here, commenting that the local authorities "acted as if I had a bomb in one pocket and a gun in the other."

"Actually, the most dangerous thing I have is ideas," Thomas said as he bade adieu to the eastern Arkansas sharecroppers he has been urging to unionize.

Withering comment on "Southern hospitality" came from the tall, grey-haired former presidential candidate as he mounted the porch three blocks from the town square, across a railroad track.

"I am glad there is hospitality across the tracks," he told the several hundred tenant farmers and curious citizens gathered around the porch. "I would think the merchants of Marked Tree except certain plantation owners who have a store here, should be glad for me to speak here. They act as if I had a bomb in one pocket and a gun in the other. Actually, the most dangerous thing I have is ideas."

Thomas had called a sharecropper rally for the public square today, only to run into a local city ordinance prohibiting meetings in public places without a permit from the mayor.

Managers of the Thomas tour said "city officials refused permission for him to speak."

Mayor J. E. Fox commented that "no such meetings have been permitted here since adoption of the ordinance in 1934."

The rally was promptly moved on to private property. Several hundred persons, including a large percentage of negroes, attended.

At the local meeting and another held during the morning at Gilmore, Howard Kester, member of the party, read telegrams he said "we are going to send to Relief Administrator Hopkins, President Roosevelt and Secretary Wallace."

The telegrams asked for "impartial investigation" of relief conditions throughout the cotton belt, an interview with the President by a representative of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, and release of the Mary Conners Myers report on eastern Arkansas sharecroppers.

Mrs. Myers recently investigated the tenant situation in this area for the Department of Agriculture, but her findings were not made public.

Thomas, in criticizing Marked Tree for preventing his meeting in the public square, said an Englishman who recently visited the area to investigate share-cropping had to speak outside the corporation limits.

"It was a shame," he said, "that Jenny Lee, who was once a member of the English Parliament, was chased to the edge of town to make a speech. City officials should have welcomed such a distinguished visitor."

He assailed the Marked Tree Cooperative Association, formed here several weeks ago for the announced purpose of providing jobs for needy, for "inaction."

Thomas said he had "witnessed an eviction on the road near here yesterday," and said: "Why doesn't the Cooperative Association do something about that?"

# SOCIALIST DEMANDS ECONOMIC EQUALITY

Commercial Appeal

## Thomas Brings "Amen" From Negroes at Parkin

## PRAISES TENANT UNION

3-14-35

## Futrell Says No Funds for Investigation of Sharecroppers' Plight—May Present Problem to Legislature Later

Memphis

By The Associated Press

PARKIN, Ark., March 13.—A crowd of 500 persons, about evenly divided between whites and negroes, gathered around a cotton loading platform here late today and heard Norman Thomas open his drive for agricultural unionization support in the sharecropper counties of Eastern Arkansas.

Many, mostly the negroes, responded in camp meeting fashion, clapping hands and shouting "amens" and "that's right" at the climaxes of the Socialist leader's address.

Thomas emphasized his belief that "this tenant problem is just a phase of a much larger problem, the general problem of poverty."

**Job For All Aim**

"A job for all America is our aim," he said. "I predict that your Southern Tenant Farmers' Union is destined to be an important factor in the national union picture."

The head of the American Socialist party came here after a conference with Governor Futrell in Little Rock, at which the governor said no funds were available for a state investigation into the plantation system, which Thomas urged.

He left here early tonight for another address at Marked Tree, where Ward H. Rodgers, young FERA school teacher, was recently convicted of anarchy after a share-crop meeting speech.

Thomas criticized Senators Joe T. Robinson and Hattie W. Caraway of Arkansas for "inaction," and lampooned Roosevelt "recovery efforts," the Townsend pension plan and Huey Long's share-the-wealth program.

When Thomas asked his audience how many in it "had no work," the chairman announced 107 hands had been counted.

Mrs. W. H. Stutz, wife of the chairman of the executive committee of the tenant union, presided at the open air meeting.

**Criticize Co-Op Group**

Thomas "warned" his hearer to "fight shy" of the Marked Tree Co-Operative Association, which has been charged with being a "company union" of tenants.

"Governor Futrell told me," said Thomas, "that some landlords were ruining themselves supporting their tenants. If cases like this can be pointed out and supported with evidence, I want to give it all the publicity I can."

Thomas left the state capitol with an assertion that "I would choose 10 times over to livein the New York slums than in some Arkansas farm counties."

He came here to fill a speaking engagement under auspices of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union whose cause he espoused after it had charged mistreatment and evictions of sharecropper by plantation owners and oppression under the AAA cottton control program.

**Exaggerated, Says Futrell**

"Except for scattered instances," Governor Futrell told Thomas, "I do not believe that conditions are as bad as reported. There is one thing taht you do not realize in New York and that is that you cannot get by with race equality. Right or wrong that is the condition. We are willing to give every civil right, but you cannot tal kof social equality."

"We seek," said Thomas, "economic equality. But where there is prejudice, both sides lose. We are not advocating anything but the right of both white and negro to get recognition of their rights as a worker."

would welcome "an impartial investigation" into the southern plantation system and suggested that should the Legislature, adjourning tomorrow, later meet in special session, he would ask for such an inquiry.

# The Meddlers Come —Offering Nothing

Now that another flock of meddlers has come and gone, the people of the South in general and of Arkansas in particular may expect a revival of the uproar from New York about the condition of the tenant farmer and the share-cropper.

First came one Roger Baldwin, director of the American Civil Liberties Union, a black and tan outfit that had its birth in a movement to keep slackers from defending their country during the World War and got most of its inspiration from Baldwin himself, after he got out of Leavenworth. Close on his heels came Norman Thomas, leader of the Socialist party, a very nice gentleman fired with the idea that because a man works hard and accumulates something he is a capitalist and, therefore, a menace to the social order.

No good was to be expected from the visit of Baldwin. His outfit thrives on meddling in other people's affairs. An admitted agitator, who baldly confessed that he once belonged to the I. W. W., and who upholds the right of a citizen to advocate the overthrow of the government by violence, even to the point of assassination, his theories are a little too raw even for the distressed and discontented people he came to mingle with.

But Thomas had an opportunity to do something worth while. He came to Arkansas at a time when the landowners and business men of Marked Tree were honestly and sincerely trying, through a spirit of co-operation, to find work and relief for the unemployed share-croppers of their community. Not that Mr. Thomas knows anything about cotton, about farming, or about Southern living conditions. A Londoner might just as well spend a week on a Bolivar County plantation and go back to England and undertake to write about the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth Rock.

Not only did he fail to take advantage of the opportunity, but he offered nothing in its place. If there is anything in Mr. Thomas' qualities of leadership, if his program includes anything that appeals to the unfortunate, a little sound advice from him would have gone a long way. He should have seen that the landowners and business men of Marked Tree were trying to do something helpful and useful.

Instead of that, Mr. Thomas blew into town with criticism for everybody. Huey Long's yelling is insincere, Father Coughlin's suggestions are wholly inadequate, President Roosevelt is trying to save capitalism. Everybody is out of step but Thomas. And then, to cap the climax, Mr. Thomas delivers himself of a solution of the cotton situation which is really a gem. All cotton plans are wrong. What he would do is to go to the machine production of cotton, gang plows, picking machines, more acreage, and the elimination of hand labor.

This, he concludes, would raise the standard of living. Of course, this thing called the standard of living is a relative term and really means nothing, but any schoolboy ought to know that if and when the South goes to machine production of cotton as Mr. Thomas suggests, then there will be a real share-cropper problem, a real unemployment problem. It may be that this could be done under a Socialist program, whatever that may be, but it must, of necessity, be a long process under any practical and workable program.

The people of this country have been burdened with too many theories already. First thing we know, the entire machinery is going to be thrown out of gear. It is enough that those who have some basis of soundness for their theories, some sense of co-operation for the employer and employe, some regard for the relationship between initiative and property rights, are dabbling with the situation. Those who disregard these principles, who have nothing to offer and whose constant meddling and stirring-up is their best meal ticket have no place in the line of march.

It is unfortunate that the people of the South must again face a period of enforced salvation by a lot of agitators who know nothing of its people, its customs, its traditions, its problems. They kept at it for 50 years and finally worked the nation up into a cruel and needless civil war, and what was worse, a crushing and humiliating reconstruction. Singularly free of them for a generation, the South came back, until today she stands as the bulwark of true Americanism. Now they are at it again. They will not prevail.

SHARE CROPPER SEES THE LIGHT. Arkansas has acquired considerable notoriety in the past by the ruthless manner in which it seeks to surpress the outcry of the share cropper against exploitation. Several years ago when a group of Negroes rebelled against this form of economic enslavement, they were arrested, tried in the courts and given death sentences. The right of free speech—guaranteed by the Federal Constitution has no legal status in Arkansas, which enacts laws forbidding the share cropper from organizing and waging a fight for a square deal.

Something unusual and unheard of has taken place recently in Arkansas. Realizing that race baiting has kept them divided and in opposition, although their economic interests are the same, white and colored share croppers met and organized a union for their mutual benefit. They call themselves the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and have a membership of 6,000.

State officials evidently did not look with a friendly eye on such an alliance. A youug minister, the Rev. Ward Rogers, was arrested, sentenced to six months in jail and fined $500 on the charge of anarchy. The sole complaint against him was that he made public addresses advocating a new day for the share cropper. The Rev. Claude Williams met with a similar fate. Most likely, had they beenza Negroes bodily harm would have come to them—maybe lynching.

The charge is made by C. T. Carpenter, attorney for the union, that convictions against organizers charging anarchy, insurrection against the State and obstructing traffic are the result of a campaign of intimidation and terror waged by plantation owners and aided by officers of the law in violation of basic civic liberties.

Speaking to hundreds of share croppers at Marked Tree ,Ark., in a bare lamplit hall beside the railroad track, Norman Thomas, leader of the Socialist Party in the United States, declared that the hope in Arkansas was most decidedly with the masses and not the State Capitol at Little Rock. He scored Gov. J. M. Futrell, who was accused of reciting all the stock reasons why nothing can be done or why he can do nothing to stop the acts of terrorism instigated by plantation owners.

Throughout the cotton-growing states the share cropper has been hardest hit by the acreage reduction plan. While plantation owners receive Federal funds for planting less cotton it has meant misery and want for many share croppers and their families. Recognition of the fact by white and colored farmers that they have a common interest and must stand together is most disturbing to those who benefit by sowing seeds of race hatred.

## TENANT URGANIZERS MOVE TO MEMPHIS

### Push Demands for Federal Protection in Arkansas

While Marked Tree, Ark., was reported peaceful yesterday following a flare-up Saturday in the controversy between planters and Southern Tenant Farmers' Union organizers, the scene of farm labor discussion shifted temporarily to Memphis.

H. Clay East, formerly of Tyronza and now of Memphis; H. L. Mitchell, union secretary, and Howard Gester, Nashville Socialist, met here and agreed to follow up their demands for federal protection against a "reign of terror" in Eastern Arkansas. East said that he and Miss Mary Hillyer, New York City were ordered out of Poinsett County after addressing sharecroppers Saturday.

Meanwhile, the Marked Tree Cooperative Association, organized to relieve the unemployment situation in and around Marked Tree, proceeded with its program of trying to find jobs and dispensing food and medical aid to the needy. A number of men have been put to work within the past few days in sandbagging the St. Francis levee at Marked Tree.

## Evicted Tenants Denied Injunction In Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK, ARK., March 25.—(AP) — The State Supreme Court held today evicted tenant farmers could not sue in Arkansas courts to enforce provisions of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration's 1934-35 cotton acreage reduction contracts.

Such contracts, the court said, in denying Winburn West and other tenants of H. Norcross, of Poinsett County, an injunction to prevent eviction, are enforceable only by the Secretary of Agriculture or the United States Attorney-General.

Tenants, the court said, were third parties to such contracts and, since no obligation was placed upon them by terms of the contract, they could not sue to enforce it.

## Sharecropper Sector Is Ominously Silent

MARKED TREE, Ark., March 24 (AP)—Sabbath quiet enveloped the east Arkansas cotton country today, but sharecropper organizers said the outward calm belied an undercurrent of bitterness and threatened violence.

H. Clay East, a former Tyronza (Ark.) resident and a speaker for the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, and Miss Mary Hillyer, of New York city, a lecturer for the League for Industrial Democracy, were warned by officers to get out of Marked Tree and "stay out," following a rally of white and negro tenant farmers yesterday afternoon, they reported at Memphis, Tenn.

East was back today in Memphis, where he now resides, but Miss Hillyer was en route to New Orleans on her lecture tour which also will take her to several cities in Texas.

Arkansas.

Agriculture - 1935

Labor Condition

New York Herald-Tribune

FEB 3 19

# 2 Addressing Arkansas Crop Meeting Beaten

## Koch, Commonwealth College Head, Says Assailants Used Pistols on Him

## Found 'Lynch Rope' Later

## Had Gone Into State to Help Organize Southern Union

*By The Associated Press*

MEMPHIS, Feb. 2.—Lucien Koch, director of Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark., reported today that he and Bob Reed, a Commonwealth student and a member of the International Labor Defense, were beaten with pistols and other instruments last night as the result of a meeting of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union at Gilmore, Ark.

Koch said he was taken from the union's meeting at Gilmore, where he and Reed and others were addressing about 200 share-croppers, mostly Negroes, in a Negro church. He said he and Reed were not members of the union but went into east Arkansas to support the move to "organize the Southern tenant farmers."

"I was pulled out of the meeting and beaten with pistols and fists," Koch said. "Reed came out to inquire into the disturbance, and he, too, was beaten.

"We were taken to the county jail at Marion and questioned for about two hours. Later, were were released. No charge was placed against us.

"Later, when we got back to the church, we found a 'lynch rope' the men were carrying. They apparently had lost it in the excitement. We haven't decided whether to press charges."

**A. A. A. Investigates Complaints**

Last night's disturbance was another incident in the bitter share-cropper controversy which has resulted in the government sending Mrs. Mary Conner Myers, Agricultural Adjustment Administration attorney, into east Arkansas to investigate complaints by share-croppers that landlords are violating acreage-reduction contracts.

"While I was speaking at the meeting," Koch said, "a man, a plantation 'riding boss' who seemed excited as though he had been drinking came in and asked what I was talking about. I said the 'Southern Tenant Farmers Union' and asked him to have a seat. He went out.

"In a few minutes he came back with about four more. I had finished my speech by this time. They grabbed me and hustled me to their car, beating me and kicking me on the way. Bob Reed came out to see what they were going to do and they grabbed him, too.

"They beat us and struck us with the butts of their pistols while we were in the car. We stopped about a quarter of a mile down the road. They were waiting for some one. Then, a deputy sheriff came by and took us away from the men and drove us into Marion. The men followed us in."

Gilmore, in Crittenden County, is west of Memphis, across the Mississippi River.

**Statement by Sheriff**

Sheriff Howard Carlin at Marion said: "They were at a meeting of white and Negro share-croppers at a Negro church last night," he continued. "Constable H. L. Dickson, of Turrell, brought them into Marion after the beating. They were not hurt. I questioned them. No charges have been preferred against any one." He said it was up to Reed and Koch to prefer charges.

Koch led a group of Common wealth students into the southeastern Kentucky coal fields in 1932 during mine labor troubles. When Koch and the four students with him arrived in Pineville, residents of the Kentucky mountains commandeered their car and drove them to Big Black Mountain in Harlan County. Later they showed up in Big Stone Gap, Va., and said they had been bound and whipped by the men who ejected them from the mine area. There were welts on their backs.

**Koch Arrested With 2 Others**

LEPANTO, Ark., Feb. 2 (AP).—Mayor M. P. Smith tonight said Ward H. Rodgers and Lucien Koch, active in the organization of East Arkansas share-croppers, were arrested here late today on charges of disturbing the peace.

The mayor said one other man was arrested on a similar charge but he did not "recall his name just now."

The three were taken into custody on a street where they were addressing a group of whites and negroes, Mayor Smith said. "They were talking about that 'share-cropper business,'" the mayor said, "and were creating a lot of tension that was unnecessary."

# 3 Arkansans Jailed In Relief Labor Probe

FORT SMITH, Ark., Feb. 12.—(AP) An unemployment organizer was charged with anarchy and two other persons, one a teacher of "labor problems" at Commonwealth College, were in custody tonight as city peace authorities took a hand in Sebastian County's relief labor troubles.

Accused of "acts encouraging personal or property injury or overthrow of government," Lorene Bryan, youthful former student of Commonwealth, was arraigned on a charge of anarchy and remanded to jail when he failed to provide $2,000 bond immediately. Trial was set for Friday.

The two others held for investigation when police broke up a meeting purportedly composed of strike sympathizers were Raymond Koch, 25, a teacher of the Mena Commonwealth institution and brother of Lucien Koch, head of the college, identified in the east Arkansas share-croppers' controversy, and F. C. Haley, former coal miner and relief worker.

# ARKANSAS TENANT FARMERS APPEAL

## Prayer for Injunction Is Considered Pending Outcome of Petition to Governor

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Feb. 10 (AP).—Injunction suits to prevent planters and ex-Arkansas officers from interfering with organization rallies of sharecroppers were threatened today as organizers for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union awaited the outcome of an appeal to Gov. J. M. Futrell of Arkansas for protection from "mob violence."

C. T. Carpenter of Marked Tree, Ark., counsel for the union, said today that he planned to go into federal court to seek protection for the union.

"We may ask injunctions to prevent mobs from breaking up union meetings," he said. "We also are considering suits for personal injuries inflicted upon speakers for the union."

There was no comment today from Governor Futrell's office at Little Rock on a telegram sent from here last night by N. L. Mitchell, Tyronza, Ark., socialist, and secretary of the union, demanding "necessary steps for our protection."

**Trouble Feared**

The telegram was sent from Memphis after the arrival here of four speakers for the union, who said they were accosted by a "mob" at Birdsong, Ark., late Saturday and then escorted by Mississippi county (Ark.), officers across the county line into Poinsett county, "to prevent trouble."

Atley DeLany, a student of Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark., said he and Roy Chaplin, Bill Reed, other Commonwealth students, and Gene Hayes, a sharecropper, were met by a "mob of planters", as they approached the site for a proopsed rally.

"The mob searched us, demanding to see our union charter, then kicked us and told us to "get along," DeLaney said.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Hale Jackson of Osceola, Ark., said he and three other officers escorted the four men out of the county "because of the possibility of trouble."

**Appeal to Governor**

"We are a legal organization incorporated under the laws of Arkansas and we petition you as governor of this state to protect the rights of Arkansas citizens," said the telegram to Gov. Futrell. "We demand that you take the necessary steps for our protection. Upon further violations of our rights, we shall petition for the protection of state militia."

Planters and officers claim organizers for the union are "socialists, working hand in hand with communists and other reds," and that the only object of the organizers is to "cause trouble."

The "evicted" sharecroppers, they said, are mostly shiftless tenants who do not want to work."

# SHARECROPPER PROBE ASKED BY ORGANIZERS

## Arkansas Officials Welcome U. S. Investigation

## FUTRELL REFUSES AID

**Union to Seek Federal Injunctions Prohibiting Interference With Meetings—To Prosecute for False Arrests**

Stating that they would "welcome" a Congressional investigation into the sharecropper situation in Northeast Arkansas, peace officers of the area, meeting yesterday at Marked Tree, decried misrepresenation of conditions among tenant farmers.

The conference of the officers was held to discuss "ways and means of preventing trouble that might arise by the preaching of racial equality, a show of force by either side and other disturbances which Southern Tenant Farmers Union organizers have been advocating," according to Denver Dudley, prosecuting attorney for the second judicial district.

The conference followed an announcement of Socialist spokesmen for the union earlier in the day that they had sent telegrams to Washington requesting a Congressional investigation.

Governor Futrell yesterday told union organizers that he had no constitutional authority for intervention with troops to protect organizers or for furnishing tents to house evicted tenants.

**Telegraph Green**

Telegrams were sent by the union yesterday to President William Green of the American Federation of Labor asking his support in a movement for a Congressional investigation; and to Senator Edward Costigan (Democrat, Colorado), asking him to use his influence "on behalf of the disinherited and exploited sharecroppers of the south who have been ruthlessly denied their rights under the AAA contracts."

"We do not believe that the good substantial citizens on either side of this controversy have anything to conceal. We believe that under the AAA program the tenants and landowners are in better condition financially than they have been in the past several years," said Mr. Dudley.

"The union thrives on possible interpretations of Section 7 of the AAA contracts.

**'Firm Ctand' Needed**

"This section provides that the landlord must maintain the same number of tenants employed by him prior to the signing of the contract."

He said that a "firm stand" by the Department of Agriculture on this section "will eliminate the bone of contention and therefore do away with the thunder of these paid organizers."

Announcement that the union planned to go into the federal courts for injunctions prohibiting interference with union meetings or to prosecute for "false arrests" of organizers was made by C. T. Carpenter, attorney for the union.

# PLANTERS MAY REQUEST MILITIA

MEMPHIS—(AP)—H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, Saturday night wired Gov. Futrell of Arkansas, that "upon further violations of our rights we shall petition you for the protection of state militia."

The telegram was sent from here, immediately after the arrival of four speakers for the union, who said they were accosted by a "mob" at Birdsong, Ark., late Saturday and

then escorted by Mississippi County (Arkansas) officers across the county line into Poinsett County, "to prevent trouble."

Atley Delany, a student of Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark., said he and three companions, Roy Chaplin, Bob Reed, Commonwealth students, and Gene Hayes, a sharecropper, were met by a "mob of planters" as they approached the site for a proposed rally of tenant farmers.

"The mob searched us, demanded to see our union charter, then kicked us and told us to 'get along,'" Delany said. "The officers courteously escorted us away from the scene."

Mitchell said that he and Ward H. Rodgers and Lucien Koch, organizers of the tenant farmers' union, would go to Little Rock Monday to ask the governor to provide a "tented city" for sharecroppers who have been evicted from land.

A rally of tenant farmers at Lepanto, Ark., Saturday went off without difficulty. It was there last Saturday that Rodgers, Koch, Delany and Robert Baker, a sharecropper, were taken into custody.

# TENANTS MEASURE IS GAINING SUPPORT

## Bankhead Would End System in South

## 30-YEAR LOANS PROPOSED

### Officials Feel That Bill Is Most Logical Approach to Problem That Is Admittedly Bad

### —Financed by Rentals

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON, Feb. 10.—Officials said today there was growing support within the administration for a measure drawn by Senator Bankhead, Democrat, Alabama, which proposes federal loans to help end the tenant system of farming.

Bankhead, author of the compulsory cotton control act, drafted his bill while agricultural adjustment officials were concerned with reports of rising resentment against the AAA and landlords among southern share croppers and renters.

The Alabama senator's proposal would establish an agency similar to the Home Owners Loan Corporation. Only tenants would be eligible for the loans to purchase lands already in cultivation. The loans would bear a low rate of interest and would be amortized over a period of 30 years.

**Financed By Rentals**

"I want the rentals now being paid to finance, ultimately," Bankhead said, "the farm purchased by each tenant."

Secretary Wallace and the AAA have said nothing publicly about the latest Bankhead bill but some officials who have studied the problem feel it is the most logical approach toward the elimination of a system admittedly bad.

The national resources board in its report assailed the southern tenant system but concrete proposals to get rid of it were lacking.

Some supporters of the Bankhead measure would not be surprised if President Roosevelt approved his proposal or similar legislation. Senator Russell, Democrat, Alabama, also has put forward a measure with ideas similar to those in the Bankhead bill.

Although the AAA had an investigator, Mrs. Mary C. Myers, in eastern Arkansas during recent trouble there between spokesmen for tenants and authorities, there was little indication today that any drastic change would result from her report.

An attempt was made to interpret the voluntary cotton contract as stipulating that landlords must retain the tenants on their places who were there when the owners joined the control plan.

AAA officials said today landlords were not required to keep the same tenants and that the contract meant landowners were not to displace tenants without obtaining others to take their places. Even this requirement is elastic. Mrs. Myers' report is in the hands of AAA officials but it has not been made public.

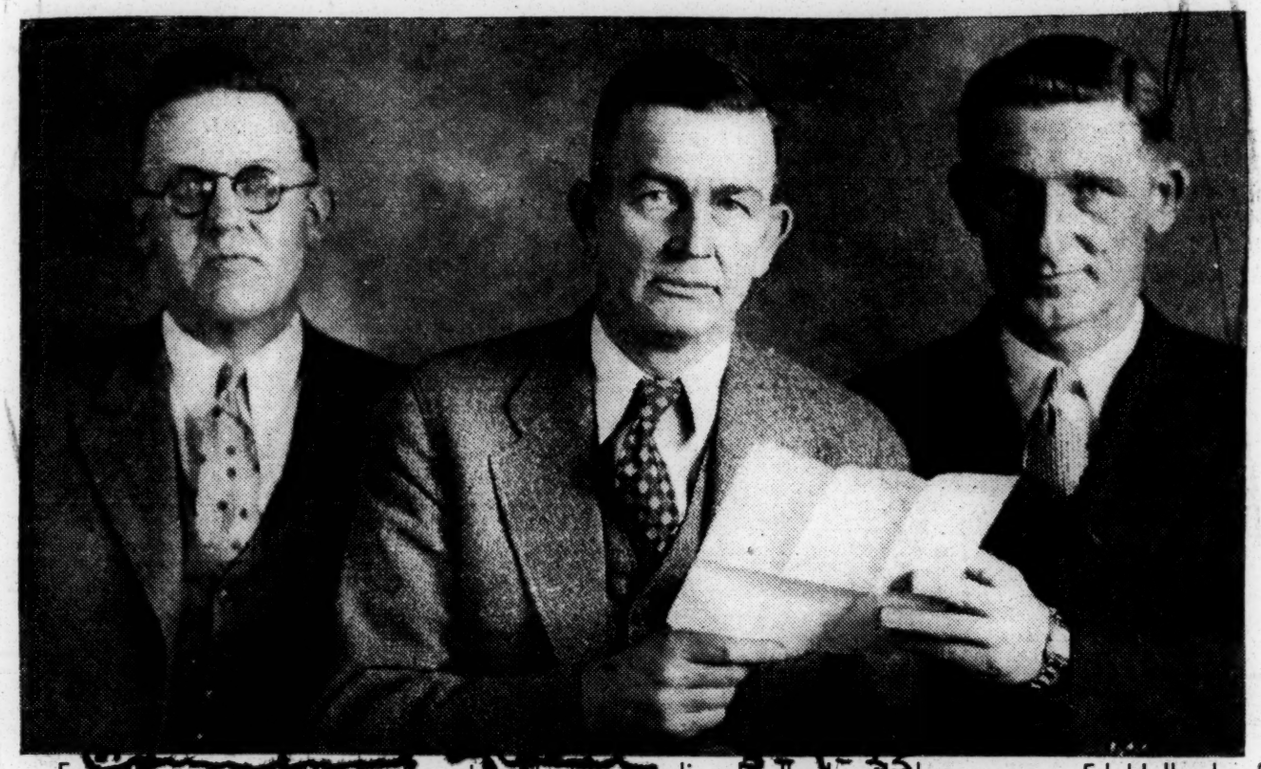
AAA officials said that reverses in recent years had deprived many former landowners of their farms and that there had been a surprising growth of tenant conditions in areas outside the south.

# Norman Thomas Ires Ark. Governor

Little Rock, Ark., Mar. 21.—(CP)—Governor J. Marion Futrell banged down on his desk and spoke in emphatic terms Wednesday and had Norman Thomas, Socialist candidate, to understand he would have to go elsewhere to have "social equality" as such would not be tolerated in Arkansas.

"There is one thing you don't realize in New York and that is: that you cannot get by with 'race equality.' Right or wrong that is the condition. We are willing to give every civil right, but you cannot talk of 'social equality,'"

# Discuss Farm Labor Controversy



East Arkansas crusaders for honest publicity regarding landlord and sharecropper, Ed Holland, of Wynne (left), John Mann of Marianna, co-chairmen of the movement, and the Rev. Dan Patch, of Wynne, president of the Business Men's Club, are shown examining letter circulated by alleged propagandists.

**Thomas replies and charges prejudice**

Thomas, who was here urging an investigation into the intolerable, unsanitary and disease breeding conditions in eastern Arkansas plantations among poverty-stricken share croppers, replied stating: "We are seeking economic equality. But where there is prejudice, both sides lose. We are not advocating anything but the right of Negroes and whites to get recognition of their rights as workers."

Referring to the pitiable conditions under which many Arkansas sharecroppers live and work, the socialist leader said, "Conditions in New York slums are not one-tenth as bad as in eastern Arkansas. I'd choose ten times to one to live in the NewYork slums rather than in Poinsett County plantations."

The socialist leader not only asked for a state investigation but that the state would petition the congress of the U. S. A. to act in the situation. Governor Futrel said Arkansas had no funds available for such and he had no inclination to tell Congress what to do

## Sharecroppers Denied Right To Sue For Eviction

By United Press.

LITTLE ROCK, March 25.—Sharecroppers or tenants have no basis for suits against landowners for eviction under the Agriculture Adjustment Administration cotton reduction contracts, the Arkansas Supreme Court held today, because they are not parties to the contracts between the landowners and the secretary of agriculture.

Arkansas.

Agriculture - 1935
& Labor Conditions.

# TENANT LAW CLASH ROILS COTTON BELT

## Share-Croppers Resent Land-Owners' Evictions in Face of Protective Provision.

4-18-35

## MISTRUST OVER PAYMENTS

## But Check of Company and County Records in Arkansas Fail to Show Forgeries.

*This is the third of a series of articles revealing the economic status of share-croppers in the South under the crop curtailment program of the AAA, written by a* TIMES *correspondent in the field.*

By F. RAYMOND DANIELL.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., April 17.—Differing opinions regarding the meaning of the somewhat ambiguous language with which the government sought to protect farm labor from the natural consequences of the acreage reduction program and dissatisfaction with the system by which parity payments are made to landlords in trust for their tenants are responsible for much of the unrest which the "three A's" have brought to the Cotton Belt.

When the plan by which owners of cotton lands were to help the government peg the price of cotton by renting 40 per cent of their land to the Secretary of Agriculture was put into operation, it was foreseen that the program might lead to widespread unemployment among the share-croppers of the South.

Therefore, Section 7 was written into the contracts which the landlords entered into with Secretary Wallace. It is a counterpart of Section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act and it has proved almost as troublesome.

### Legal Obligation of Landlord.

The section provides that the landlord shall:

"Endeavor in good faith to bring about the reduction of acreage contemplated in this contract in such a manner as to cause the least possible amount of labor, economic and social disturbance, and to this end, in so far as possible, he shall effect the acreage reduction as nearly ratably as practicable among tenants on this farm;

"Shall, in so far as possible, maintain on this farm the normal number of tenants and other employes;

"Shall permit all tenants to continue in the occupancy of their houses rent free for the years 1934 and 1935 respectively (unless any such tenant shall so conduct himself as to become a nuisance or a menace to the welfare of the producer);

"During such years shall afford such tenants or employes, without cost, access for fuel to such woodland belonging to this farm as he may designate;

"Shall permit such tenant the use of an adequate part of the rented acres to grow food and feed crops for home consumption and for pasturage for domestically used livestock, and for such use of the rented acres shall permit the reasonable use of work animals and equipment in exchange for labor."

### Stand of the Land-Owners.

Leaders of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, which has been active in Northeastern Arkansas, and C. T. Carpenter of Marked Tree, the union attorney, contend that the landlord is bound by this provision not only to keep the same number of tenant families on his land but also to keep the same ones for the duration of the contract.

The plantation owners reply unanimously that Section 7 means nothing of the kind. Since they have no legal way of keeping a good sharecropper on a plantation if he chooses to leave, they hold that it would be unfair to require them to keep a bad one whom they wanted to oust.

With the smaller allotment of land to each tenant they have no quarrel. It reduces the amount of credit that has to be advanced to each of the tenants and it has been found to result in bigger and better crops.

The right of the landlord to evict undesirable tenants was upheld recently by the Supreme Court of Arkansas when Mr. Carpenter brought suit to prevent the eviction of more than twenty sharecropper families which had been ordered by Hiram Norcross, former Kansas City lawyer who now is one of the wealthiest planters in Poinsett County.

Mr. Norcross is operating 5,000 acres of land which is being farmed by 248 families. Most of those whom he "ran off the place" had been active in the union. The Supreme Court, denying an injunction to prevent the evictions, held that since sharecroppers were not parties to the contract, they had no cause of action.

### "Managing Share" at Issue.

Under the acreage reduction program, the share tenant receives none of the government rental money, based on the average 1928-32 yield of lint cotton on the rented acres at 3½ cents a pound.

There is one exception, however, in the case of the "managing share tenant," who is defined as one "who furnishes work stock, equipment and labor used in the production of cotton and who manages the operation of the farm."

This provision was made apparently to permit the tenants of absentee landlords to share in the government rental money. Encouraged by union organizers, almost every tenant who owned a team of mules and a plow and rented land from a landlord for one-fourth of his crop, demanded recognition as a "managing share tenant," whether he was subject to the directions of a riding boss or overseer or not.

Many plantations, including the big Chapman-Dewey Lumber Company at Marked Tree, now require their tenants to sign an agreement waiving the rights of managing share tenants.

### Distrust Over Parity Payments.

While the sharecropper is not entitled to any part of the return from the rented acres, he is entitled to a share in the parity payments according to his interest in the crop. If he provides nothing but his labor, he is entitled to half the crop, from which the amount of credit advanced him through the season is deducted. If he furnishes his own team and tools he is entitled to three-fourths of the crop, minus deductions for credit advanced, interest and similar charges.

The parity payment is computed at the rate of 1 cent a pound on 40 per cent of that figure, expressed in pounds, which results from multiplying the average number of acres planted in cotton during the base years by the average yield in pounds per acre in those years.

Checks for these sums, ranging in amount from $12 to $36 for each sharecropper, are mailed by the government to the landlord, who is required to file his tenants' receipts for their share with the County Agent of the AAA.

The system has lent itself to abuses and has increased the sharecropper's mistrust of his landlord. Many of the less literate sharecroppers think that because they have not received a check from the government, they have been cheated of their parity payments. In many instances the landlord has credited the amount of the parity against the credit account of a tenant who has signed a receipt for the money without understanding what he was signing.

### Check on Tenant Signatures.

Widespread complaints among share-croppers that they had been cheated of their parity payments led this correspondent to undertake an experimental investigation.

In the office of R. L. McGill, county agent for Poinsett County, in the town of Harrisburg, there are on file the applications of landlords for Bankhead ginning certificates. On these are the signatures of the tenant farmers. A comparison of these signatures with those filed on the parity payment receipts filed by the managers of the Chapman-Dewey and E. Ritter plantations failed to reveal any apparent forgeries.

Inspection of the books of these two companies showed that in most cases the tenant's share of the parity payment had been turned over to him in cash. The last parity payment was received after Christmas and in some cases, where the tenant requested it, the money was turned over in the form of credit for Christmas shopping.

Inquiry among tenants on these plantations revealed that many share-croppers were uncertain whether they had received their money from the government until explanations were made, when all who were interviewed said that they had.

### Bitter Over Suppressed Report.

Another factor which has contributed to the dissatisfaction of the share-croppers with the administration of the three A's is the suppression of the report of Mrs. Mary Connor Myers, an attorney on the staff of the general counsel of the Agricultural Administration, who was sent to Arkansas to investigate conditions there.

Unlike earlier investigators sent out from Washington, she spent much of her time in the company of union leaders, visited the meanest little cabins of the share-croppers and talked over their troubles with them. It is the general impression among the share-croppers that the report she filed was "too hot" for publication.

In Poinsett County, which has been the storm centre of radical agitation among the share-croppers and a campaign of terrorism on the part of the planters, there are 73,000 acres of cotton land, and about 1,100 contracts have been signed in connection with the administration's acreage reduction plan.

### Work of Local Committees.

It is the duty of Mr. McGill, the county agent, to see that the landlords live up to their agreement. He is assisted in the task by twenty-four local community committeemen who work three days a week for $2.85 a day. Their job is to see to it that the acres rented to the government really are retired from cotton production—and do not shrink as they sometimes have been known to do.

Last year twenty-one landowners overplanted in the county and were caught and penalized.

The community committees are drawn always from the land-owning, planter class. They seldom attempt to settle the troubles between landlord and tenant. Such matters usually are handled in the landlord's way unless the tenant appeals to Washington when, in due time, a representative comes out to hold a hearing. By that time the tenant often has been evicted and forced to move on to another community.

Mr. McGill, the county agent, is the son of a land owner and farmer in Southeastern Arkansas. He believes thoroughly in the value of AAA as a means of improving the condition of land owner and tenant and doubts that crop reduction has caused much unemployment among the share croppers.

It may have unsettled things for a time, he said, when it was first put into operation, but his records indicate an increase in the number of tenants of the large plantations this year.

T. A. Bettis, the FERA administrator for Poinsett County, however, informed this correspondent that he has 600 families on his rolls and that fully 40 per cent of them were former tenant farmers. Most of them receive a dole of about $10 a month and commodities worth from $3 to $4, about the same amount as a share-cropper with twelve to fifteen acres would receive from his landlord while making his crop.

He hopes soon to transfer about fifty families from the relief rolls to a 1,400-acre tract which the government has rented near Trumann as a rehabilitation farm. The only trouble is that, to make room for those who are to be rehabilitated, it will be necessary to evict some families who until now have been self-supporting.

### Destitution of Drifters.

Many of those whom Mr. Bettis is carying on his rolls have only the most inadequate, makeshift shelter. Some are living in rudely thrown together hovels along the riverbanks, some are "doubling up" with families who have crops to make, in little two and four-room shanties hardly big enough for one family. A few are living rent-free in cabins that have been closed by their owners as unfit.

The records of the transient bureau of the relief administration in Memphis also indicate that there still is a large amount of unemployment among the tenant farmers of Arkansas. Miss Eva Sams, the head of the bureau, said that on April 1 she had 541 families from Arkansas on her rolls. Most of them were farm families, driven to the city in search of work, she said.

These migratory families are a common sight along the roads of Arkansas. They can be seen tramping hopelessly and aimlessly along—sometimes a mother and father carrying babies in their arms. Some of them are barefoot, and all are in rags.

Along the main highway between New Orleans and Chicago there are two such processions, one heading north drawn by the hope of high wages in the automobile factories of Cleveland and Detroit and the other going south hoping to find work in the cotton fields of Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi or Alabama.

# The Marked Tree Meeting

BY GEORGE MORRIS

By some trick of fate Marked Tree, Ark., achieved a national reputation for being the center of conflict between farm owners and tenant cotton farmers.

Marked Tree had no prior claim on the distinction. There were no problems in Poinsett County that did not exist in every county in the cotton growing states. There was no prior record of prejudice, ill will or lack of co-operation to distinguish Marked Tree from any other community similarly situated.

No reason has ever been ascribed for the selection of Detroit for automobile, Dayton for cash register or Atlanta for "Southern" headquarters, but it happened. So for some unexplained and equally mysterious reason Marked Tree, in the center of the alluvial empire of Arkansas, became the capital of the Tenant Farmers Union.

Last week some 5,000 absentee landlords, farm owners, renters and share croppers assembled at Marked Tree to hear Cully Cobb of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration explain the cotton plan with its maximum two-cent benefit on individual production not in excess of the Bankhead allotment. One classification could not be distinguished from another by appearance. They gave the speaker thoughtful and intelligent attention. They were liberal with applause and there were frequent "amens" from the colored section.

On the morning of the speaking it was discovered that someone had littered the street with circulars during the night, in which the AAA was denounced and insulting language was used about Mr. Cobb. Speakers were warned of a plan to ask questions designed to create trouble and arouse the antagonism of the tenants in the audience. On the contrary Mr. Cobb was impressed by the audience and said he had never spoken before a more attentive group.

If the appearance, manner and hospitality of the group is any index to the feelings of the people of that county, and it always is, Marked Tree has gained a reputation it does not deserve. The printed word is always more effective than the spoken word. The author of the circular realized it and gave it the signature of "Tenant Farmers Unions No. 1 to 50." Its contents were a gross libel against the hundreds of farmers of that community whose situation has changed from distress in the spring of 1933 to prosperity in the fall of 1935.

Many of them recalled a previous visit of Mr. Cobb. He went to Marked Tree in the spring of 1933 when cotton was selling around five and six cents, when it could be sold at all, and promised better things under the Roosevelt administration. They recalled that in the fall there was a price in excess of eight cents and a 10-cent loan. They recalled the 12-cent loan of 1934. They were entirely familiar with this year's plan which will give them in excess of 12 cents, as a result of selling their cotton at a better price than seven-eighths inch middling, and obtaining the benefit, determined by the difference between 12 cents and the average for seven-eighths inch.

Whatever may be the differences between the farmers and tenants the fact remains that, as Mr. Cobb said, the Agricultural Adjustment Act is administered for the benefit of the man who grows the cotton. The administration will see that tenants and everyone else get what is coming to them from the government.

The net result is that if any differences exist they are individual and should be adjusted on a basis of justice and square dealing. Those who deal with tenants should make allowance for their skepticism and suspicion. There are rare instances of mistreatment now, but tenants still remember the days when it was no uncommon thing to rob them.

It is going to take a lot of patience and square dealing to dissipate the tenant's apprehension. But on the other hand, that is the best way to fight the forces of dissatisfaction and discontent, and save the tenant from the influence of alien agitators.

## Farmers' Union Votes Cotton Pickers Strike

Constitution
9-3-35
Memphis Tenn.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Sept. 2.—(AP)—Across the strife-scarred cotton fields of eastern Arkansas a new threat of trouble rambled dimly tonight.

H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, announced here that organization which claims a strength of 12,000 to 15,000, had voted a strike of cotton pickers working on a day labor basis. The walkout would become effective at the call of strike committees.

The purpose of the strike, he said, would be to get a pay rate of $1 per hundred pounds of cotton picked.

Cotton pickers, said the union leaders, have been offered from 50 to 60 cents per hundred pounds of picked cotton this year, with some planters offering up to 75 cents as the season opens.

New York Herald-Tribune

SEP 26 1935

## Whites Fire on Negroes In Arkansas Cotton Strike

### 4,000 Pickers in Eastern Part of State Join Walkout

WYNNE, Ark., Sept. 25 (UP).—Violence flared today in the Arkansas cotton pickers' strike when a group of white men, thought to be members of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, fired on Negroes working in fields. No casualties were reported.

**4,000 Pickers Join Strike**

MEMPHIS, Sept. 25 (UP).—More than 4,000 cotton pickers in eastern Arkansas have answered the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union call, effective yesterday, H. L. Mitchell, union executive secretary, said today.

Mitchell said reports from local committees in five big cotton-producing counties of the area today showed between 4,000 and 5,000 had quit work in accord with the union's demand for $1 a 100 pounds for picking the staple.

New York Evening Post

SEP 19 1935

# 3 LEADERS SLAIN AS COTTON STRIKE SPREADS IN SOUTH

## Terror Sweeps Fields as Pickers Demand $1-a-Day Pay

## NEWS OF WALKOUT IS IGNORED IN DIXIE

By EDWARD LEVINSON

A strike of tenant farmers and share-croppers has begun in the cotton fields of several Southern States. Already three Negro strike leaders have been found dead. A widespread reign of terror is feared.

The strike has been almost completely ignored by press associations. Word of it has been forwarded to Norman Thomas, leader of the Socialist Party, who today issued an appeal for assistance for the strikers.

The strikers have only one demand—$1 for picking 100 pounds of cotton, usually a day's work. In Alabama the point has already been won by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. In Arkansas the strike is due to get under way this week.

**Three Deaths in Alabama**

The three deaths are reported from Alabama, where the strike is being directed by the Alabama Share Croppers' Union. Jim Meriwether, Joe Binney Johnson and Ed Bracy, leaders among the strikers, have been found dead in swamps and woods near Montgomery and Lowndes.

Many white share croppers have been badly beaten for their participation in the strike or their sympathy with the strikers, according to word received here by the Federated Press, a labor news service.

Despite the terrorism, some gains are reported for the strikers in Alabama as well as Oklahoma. The wages paid for cotton picking around Lowdensboro and Burkville are said to have risen from 35 cents to 65 cents a hundred pounds.

Near Camo Hill in Tallapoosa County the landlords are paying 75 cents a hundred and throwing in two meals a day, which is just about equal to the strikers' demands.

An indication of the repression induced by the planters and local authorities is the action taken in Letobatchee, where a new ordinance provides that Police Magistrate Louis Jenkins is to be, ex-officio, secretary-treasurer of every Nego organization.

The strike is being directed and organized in secret councils held in the woods and out-of-the-way cabins after nightfall.

**Strike Vote 11,186-450**

The strike voted by the members of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union was carried through by the executive council of the union, which maintains headquarters in Memphis, Tenn. The strike proposal carried overwhelmingly, 11,186 being cast for it and 450 against.

A strike committee has been set up, its membership guarded as carefully as possible. Local leaders have been selected, and, despite the record of terrorism by planters and their "riding bosses," as the foremen are known, a full roster has been obtained.

The strike committee is circulating a mimeographed appeal to the members of the union, an appeal that is being read and deciphered by groups of members while others stand guard at outposts to give warning of the possible approach of planters' agents.

"The union has voted to call our first strike," says the message. "Cotton pickers will strike for $1 a hundred. The strike committee has been selected. Local strike committees on many plantations have been chosen.

"Cotton picking is here now. That means all of us must go to the fields. Young and old; men, women and children. We will drag heavy sacks down the long rows. It is backbreaking toil. Last year the planters paid 40 cents or 50 a hundred. This year they plan to do the same. A good picker will average about 100 pounds a day. Women and children still less.

"The union has decided. We have cast our vote. The rich planters get millions of dollars from the Government for cotton we didn't raise. They want to pay starvation wages.

**Ready to Face Death**

"We have been chosen as the strike committee. We are going to face death, perhaps, that others might live. The planters are going to organize night riders to beat and kill men, to burn women and children, to burn houses and churches. They will try to starve us out. We must have a strike relief fund."

The committee is asking each member to contribute five cents to the strike relief fund. Mr. Thomas today urged that friends of the strikers send contributions to H. L. Mitchell, executive secretary, Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, 2527 Broad Street, Memphis, Tenn.

"The strikers are doing the work of pioneers," Mr. Thomas said here today. "A tenant farmers' strike means something different than a strike of industrial workers in communities where strikes and unions are more or less accepted, if not approved.

"The union share croppers are literally, given the economic serfdom and the racial hatred of the farm communities, taking their lives in their hands. Those who have any regard for the decencies of life and an ounce of admiration for heroism should give the strikers and their union substantial and immedate assistance."

Agriculture-1935
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas-

# 'RUN OFF FARMS,' TENANTS DECLARE

Times

## Dispossession Is Laid to Link With Union by Arkansas Share-Croppers.

4-20-35

## SYSTEM 'LIKE PEONAGE'

Memphis

### Ousted Families, Resembling Refugees, Throng Roads Seeking Federal Relief.

*This is the fifth of a series of articles revealing the economic status of share-croppers in the South under the crop curtailment program of the AAA, written by a* TIMES *correspondent in the field.*

**By F. RAYMOND DANIELL.**

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

MEMPHIS, April 19.—A large number of share-croppers who had been told by organizers for the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union that the government would protect them from eviction found themselves legally dispossessed or forcibly "run off the place" by the large plantation owners of Northeastern Arkansas last Winter.

Exact figures on the number of victims of this type of reprisal against the threat of collective bargaining on the plantations are not obtainable. Union sympathizers estimate that there were at least 200 such cases in the five counties of Craighead, Crittenden, Cross, Mississippi and Poinsett.

It is a serious matter for a share-cropper to be put out of the cabin he calls home in January and February. By that time most of them have spent most of the proceeds of the last year's crop and landlords are reluctant to furnish credit to new tenants until late in March or April when the Spring planting begins.

**Scene Like War Times.**

Visitors to Arkansas at the time when the evictions were at their height, say the scene resembled that behinds the lines in wartime.

The roads were clogged with refugees making for the cities and gov-

their case is that Japan's purchase consist largely of raw material tha must be bought where it i cheapest.

## 'ASTRAKHAN' RABBITS BRE[illegible]

### New Types of Fur Being Devel oped by British Fanciers.

From medieval times the wool o the Astrakhan lamb has been high ly prized in the textile centres c the world; always has it defied a imitations—in recent years the sub stitution of the Belgian hare fo Hudson seal, of mink for sable, an of kid for chinchilla, &c., left i unaffected. Now, according to correspondent of The Times of Lon don its turn has come and with i a possible fortune for British rab bit fanciers:

"During the past fifteen year there has been widespread interes in scientific methods of breeding rabbits for definite colors, and more recently, in the production o new types of fur, such as the now popular rex or mole-coated rabbit By applied science breeders car produce many new varieties of rab bit, well-known examples being the squirrel, silver fox, black beveren and brown beveren. There have also been mutations, or accidenta occurrences of entirely new charac ters, of which the chinchilla, sable marten and rex-furred rabbits are good examples.

"Among the rex-coated rabbits number appeared with a varying amount of wavy or slightly curled hair, but all the early specimens were bucks. Now the Astrakhan rex rabbit, with an entirely curly coat has beent evolved and promises to be one of the most impor tant varieties in Great Britain. The curly coat in rabbits apears to b inherited, although its genetics ar not yet fully known.

# FAITH IN THE PRESS SEEN LOST IN REIC[illegible]

**Continued From Page One.**

him to tell how he set fire to the burning bush.

The Nordic ideal, it is related, is a man as tall as Dr. Paul Joseph Goebbels, as blond as Reichsfuehrer Adolf Hitler, as modest as Gen eral Goering and as moral as the late Captain Ernst Roehm.

When informed the Reichstag wa burning, General Goering is said t have glanced at his watch, saying "What! So soon?"

One anecdote is that of a Jewis family abroad that received a lette from relatives in Germany saying "We have a wonderful life. Not hair on the head of any Jew ha been touched, and Hitler is bringin us toward a better future. Uncl Moritz, who expressed the opposit opinion, is being buried tomorrow.

There is another tale of a Jew who saved Hitler from drowning Asked by the Reichsfuehrer wheth er he had any wish that the leade could fulfill, the Jew replied: "Yes don't let any one know about it."

A man released from a concentra tion camp is pictured as telling hi friends what a wonderful time h had there—plenty to sea, games a day long and a wonderful library "But how did you get your nos broken and your ear torn off? asked his auditor. "Hush!" warne the released prisoner. "That is jus cruelty propaganda."

**Press Rapidly Losing Support.**

Public support of the censore press in Germany has been subsid ing to a marked degree in the las year, the circulation even of th Angriff, Dr. Goebbels's own organ having fallen off greatly.

Dr. Goebbels has urged the pres to show more spirit and to prin more interesting news. Newspapers however, have found caution neces sary because severe penalties hav been visited on them if they de parted from the rules and policie laid down by the propaganda au thorities. Many foreign journal have been barred for carrying to outspoken articles on what was hap pening in Germany.

[illegible]934 I was making a c[illegible]p on [illegible] at Beasley, farmed by Hiram [illegible]cross. My overseer was Mr. [illegible]er. He told me to vacate the [illegible]ce. I made a share-crop on the [illegible]m and obeyed his orders as best [illegible] could. I know of no reason why [illegible] wanted me to leave.

**Tenant's "Things" [illegible]oved.**

"I was unable to fi[illegible] [illegible]er place to go and on Thur[illegible] Jan. 10, 1935, he came to my pl[illegible] while I was gone, took my things out of my house and moved them into the road. He permitted me to put them in the storehouse that was not being used, but would not permit me to make a fire to warm myself.

"I made four and a half bales of cotton last year and paid my account in full and never had any trouble with him."

Similar stories were told by tenants on the farms of the Chapman-Dewey Company which owns 17,000 acres near Marked Tree and by tenants on the Twist Brothers' plantation at Twist in Cross County.

Chapman - Dewey moved some twenty-five families, share-croppers all, according to Mr. Carpenter, but largely "squatters," according to company officers.

Among the cases which were referred to by Mr. Carpenter was that of C. G. Fletcher, a share-cropper on the Green & Reynolds plantation in Craighead County.

**Government Contract Cited.**

Having his own team and tools, Mr. Fletcher was able to rent cotton land from the company for one-fourth of his crop, but he was charged $7 an acre for land on which to grow corn and hay for his stock.

Since his landlord was receiving rent from the government in connection with the acreage reduction program, Mr. Fletcher thought he was entitled to share in the government benefits and sought to have himself declared a "managing share tenant."

He produced a "contract," written in pencil on a deposit slip of the Bank of Jonesboro, reading as follows:

"Between Green & Reynolds and C. G. Fletcher. Party of second part agrees to pay one fourth of cotton, and $7 an acre for corn and hay land. Party of the second part gets U. S. rented acres free of rent."

W. J. Green, a field representative of the Department of Agriculture, investigated Mr. Fletcher's case, similar to that of many others, and held that, since his farming was supervised by a riding boss, he was not a managing share tenant within the meaning of the law and therefore was not entitled to any part of the government rental.

On Dec. 21, 1934, Fletcher was ordered to vacate his house by Jan. 1, 1935.

**Organizers Find Refuge.**

Now new crops are about to be planted, the broad fields have been cleared of the brown stalks of last year's crop and the land lies broken in neat furrows.

The evictions have ceased, but many of those who were most active in organizing the union have been forced to flee for their lives and go into hiding. More than a dozen of these are living on a farm some sixty miles from Marked Tree.

Under cover of night, THE NEW YORK TIMES correspondent was taken by sympathizers to see them, but only after solemn pledges not to reveal their whereabouts were exacted and given.

They are living, Negroes and white men together, in a small cabin, the doors of which are stoutly barred and the road to which is guarded against night riders.

Only a few of these exiles from the wrath of the planter, however, are actual share-croppers.

Among those at the farm this night were A. B. Brookins, a Negro preacher of Marked Tree, who was chaplain of the union; Ed Pickering, a white man formerly employed in the mill of the Poinsett Lumber Company; W. W. Lee, a former union paperhanger; Walter Moskop, an unemployed white man, and W. H. Stultz of Parkin, in Cross County. The latter, who is president of the union, said he had not tried to make a crop for several years.

**Got $61.69 for Crop.**

Others at the cabin, but not living there, were Clay East, a gasoline service station manager, who was first president of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, and H. L. Mitchell, who ran a pants pressing establishment at Tyronza.

The only actual share-croppers among the exiles were George Daniels, who formerly worked on a plantation owned by Sally Sims, a Negro, at Birdsong, Ark., and John Allen, a 67-year-old Negro, who from 1924 until last Winter, worked from twenty to thirty acres on the Twist Brothers plantation.

Allen said he received $61.69 from his crop last year, but was informed by Fred Turnney, the superintendent of the farm, that there was a debt of $145.37 against him.

Allen, who had kept his own accounts, questioned this and was informed that he had been charged $21 for plowing up his land before he moved on it, that he owed $6 an acre for plowing corn land, $2.50 "interest" on his credit account and $22.50 on a "petty account."

**Narrowly Escaped Lynching.**

Last January, Allen said, he was told to move off the plantation, apparently because he had protested against the accounting.

Then one Sunday, after attending a meeting of his union local on Turkey Island in the St. Francis River, Allen, who was secretary of the local, was caught by riding bosses with union documents on his person. He says he narrowly escaped a lynching.

Mr. Stultz, the president of the union, said he received his orders to leave Marked Tree in the office of the Chapman-Dewey store in Marked Tree.

Among those he named as having issued the order for him to get out were A. C. Spellings, farm manager for Chapman-Dewey; Fred Bradshaw, a planter, and Art Bullard, the town constable.

# NEGRO PICKERS STRIKE IS HELD IMPROBABLE

Commercial

### Officers At Wynne Say Situation Is Well In Hand

Appeal

WYNNE, Ark., Sept. 25. — A threatened strike of negro cotton pikers appeared improbable today and law enforcement officers said they had the situation well in hand. The strike threat developed after attempts had been made to raise

wages to $1 per hundred pounds and followed the firing of shots at negroes on Twist Brothers plantation near Wynne today. None was injured. Pickers are receiving now 75 cents per hundred pounds.

James Robertson, deputy prosecuting attorney, said the labor dispute was fomented by officers of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union. 9-28-35

Sheriff C. M. Stacey said at Wynne that a number of handbills had been distributed over Eastern Arkansas.

Agitators from outside the state were blamed by Robertson.

"An investigation by the Department of Labor," he said, "has revealed taht the Southern Tenant Farmers Union is not affiliated with the American Federation of year it collected $35,000 in dues from ignorant negroes and white tenant farmers and sharecroppers."

He charged the strike was fomented to raise more dues for the union.

After a conference today at Blytheville between C. T. Carpenter, Marked Tree, counsel for the union, and W. Leon Smith, deputy prosecutor there, cases of Lee Moskoy and his wife; George Andrews and J. A. West, held in connection with the alleged attempt to incite a strike among pickers,, were postponed.

# PLANTERS PREPARE TO MEET STRIKE

## Union Leaders Insist Pickers Leaving Work

WYNNE, Ark., Sept. 27.—(AP)—Beneath the serenity of Eastern Arkansas' cotton fields today was a silent conflict between union organizers to spread a general strike and plantation owners to keep their pickets at work. 9-28-35

Planters and officers, minimizing the possibility of a widespread walkout, were taking precautions, however, to meet any emergency as the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union insisted that 4,000 pickers have left the fields demanding payment of $1 for each 100 pounds of cotton picked.

With the cotton season approaching its height, no chances were being taken that a strike might paralyze harvest of the crop.

Harry Malcolm, deputy state labor commissioner of Little Rock, prepared to launch an investigation today into the union's strike activities to determine the extend of the walkout.

Malcolm is familiar with the strife-marked history of differences between pickers and planters. Last year he investigated the union's activities and reported it had a membership of 6,000. Organizers now claim a much greater membership. Malcolm also acted as mediator in disputes between tenants and landlords.

Replying to statements of union leaders that at least 4,000 pickers have struck, officers in Poinsett, Crittenden, Mississippi, Cross and St. Francis counties said that there is no indication of a general strike, with an abundance of labor available at prevailing wages of 60 cents per hundred pounds.

No violence has been reported since early this week, when a shot was fired while negroes were at work near Twist, Ark. Officers branded this as an attempt to "scare negroes from work," but union leaders said their aim would be accomplished without violence.

# Strike Weapon Believed Ineffective In Northeast Arkansas Cotton Fields

LITTLE ROCK, ARK., Sept. 29.—(AP)—Industry's strike weapon was brandished over the cotton fields of northeast Arkansas last week, but its effectiveness as applied to one of the South's oldest agricultural problems remained a moot question.

The controversy—part of the same controversy that has been in progress since the War Between the States—involved the complicated problems of farm tenancy, share-cropping, cotton-picking.

The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, organized for the avowed purpose of amalgamating share-crop interests, called for a strike of pickers unless plantation owners paid $1 per 100 pounds of cotton picked. The union claimed 4,000 left the fields. 9-30-35

Farm owners and peace authorities in the area scoffed at the movement, said no general walkout was in evidence, that there was an abundance of labor available at a prevailing scale of 60 cents per 100 pounds.

Union spokesmen disputed these announcements, claiming many pickers were receiving as low as 35 cents per hundred.

In the full blown and whitened fields, picking went on. Strike handbills flooded the section. At Twist, Ark., shots were fired over the heads of negroes bent over the boll-laden plants. Officers said it was an act of intimidation, but there were no arrests in connection with it.

Other arrests at scattered points were described by strike sympathizers as growing out of the distribution of the handbills, but local authorities said there was no connection.

To many, picking cotton in the same rows where their fathers and grandfathers and great-grandfathers picked cotton also, it was all not entirely understandable.

The controversy, however, threw a new spotlight on a tenant problem which prompted Socialist Norman Thomas, touring the section last Spring, to describe the share-cropper as "the real forgotten man."

Thomas espoused the cause of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, first group to attempt organization of the thousands of share-croppers in the south. When the War Between the States freed the slaves, farm tenancy and sharecropping grew out of the compact reached between plantation owners and free labor under which the former provided land and provisions and the latter the toil to produce each year's cotton crop.

Steady increase in non-ownership tenancy in this State is shown in figures of the Arkansas planning board which give a 63 percentage of tenants on Arkansas farms last year as against 45.4 per cent in 1900.

The New Deal's resettlement administration has found that among this State's rural population, 72,597 own all of their own farms; 16,412 are part-owners; 634 are managers; 152,691 tenant farmers; 14,961 cash tenants, and 137,730 "sharecroppers and all others."

The tenant problem was aired widely last year when the union complained to Washington that "scores of tenants" were being evicted from cotton-contract land in violation of the government cotton crop control agreements.

A Federal investigator visited the area and submitted a private report to the Department of Agriculture.

State Deputy Labor Commissioner H. C. Malcom, who acted as a mediator in numerous disputes between landlords and tenants over the year-end settlements for the crop, made the broad statement in his report that he did not find any sharecroppers who understood the government control contract.

However, new hope of solving some of the tenant-farmers problems is seen in the rural resettlement program by Regional Director T. Roy Reid.

"The administration," says Reid, "confidently expects it to go a long way toward freeing the average low-income farmer from the shackles of the cash crop and credit system, under which he has remained for generations a year or more behind production and income."

Difference of opinion on how to adjust landlord-tenant relationship which has been maintained for nearly three-quarters of a century meantime remains as varied as the staple lengths of cotton.

# *Sharecropper Closes Year "Owing" Owner*

LITTLE ROCK, Dec. 5.—(AP)—A Jefferson County sharecropper complained to State Labor Commissioner Ed I. McKinley today that a year's labor of himself and 14 members of his family found them still indebted to their landlord for $43. 12-6-35

The labor commissioner said the family consisted of a negro, his wife and 12 children, who worked a 40-acre tract.

"The report shows that the family earned $413 during the year," McKinley said. "The year's grocery bill for the family amounted to only $223.40.

"The sharecropper raised 13 bales of cotton. The landowner claims they still owe him $43, but preliminary investigation indicates that they should receive about that amount from him."

# ROSY-HUED PICTURE OF TENANTS BLASTED

## Arkansas Labor Aide Says AAA Report Propaganda

11-10-35

## INDEBTEDNESS IS RECITED

### Malcolm Says Share-Croppers Poverty-Stricken in Many Instances and Same Have Been Evicted

By The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Nov. 9.—A rosy picture of plantation tenant life in Arkansas presented in an Agricultural Adjustment Administration report was described today by Harry Malcolm, deputy state labor commissioner, as "propaganda, pure and simple."

The AAA report, given out yesterday, was based on a survey of what it described as representative plantations, and said the Arkansas sharecropper was making more money, getting out of debt and living better. Chicken and dumplings fresh pork and beef, vegetables and fruits were listed as part of the current diet of "the average sharecropper."

**Thousands in Debt**

By contrast, Malcom, who made an investigation of the tenant situation in Eastern Arkansas some months ago, said that thousands of the tenants were in debt with little hope of getting out, that many could not clothe and feed their families and themselves, that garments made from cotton sacks were common in the area, that landowners periodically had their tenants arrested and fined to increase their indebtedness and hush complaints, and that complaining tenants are habitually moved off the plantations.

"These people are so poverty stricken at this time that they can not have 'sow belly,' much less chicken or pork," said Malcom. "Salt meat, which used to be a big item of food with the plantation workers, now sells for 30 cents a pound and is beyond their reach."

**"Propaganda"**

"The report from the Agricultural Adjustment Administration is propaganda, pure and simple, and we have the records of more than 3,000 cases on file in this office that will disprove those claims. If they wanted a picture of true conditions, why didn't they avail themselves of the records?

"The report of the AAA that the sharecropper is eating chicken and dumplings, fresh pork and beef, is totally unfounded. Whoever obtained this report for the government must have obtained his information from the landlords. Our records are here any time they wish to avail themselves of them."

Arkansas.

Agriculture—1935

Labor Conditions.

## AAA Not To Keveal Sharecropper Report

WASHINGTON, March 15.—(AP)—Despite demands of Norman Thomas and numerous others, the AAA said today it would not make public the report of Mary Connor Myers, special legal investigator into southern share-cropper conditions.

Hundreds of letters have been received by Secretary Wallace and Chester C. Davis, AAA administrator, urging publication of the report on landlord-tenant relationships in eastern Arkansas.

Officials of the organization declared, however, that the report is confidential, that it was no more a public document than a report of the department of justice, and would not be privileged matter for publication even if given out.

## THOMAS IN ARKANSAS TO AID SHARECROPPER

### Socialist Leader Plans Conference With Futrell

### SEDITION BILL DEBATED

### House Passes Measure to Curb Reds With 20 Years Imprisonment—Labor College to Continue Activities

By The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, March 12.—Socialist Norman Thomas came to Arkansas tonight in behalf of the southern sharecropper while forces in the Legislature grappled over a sedition bill inspired at least in part by the recurrent controversy between sharecroppers and their landlords.

Thomas, who once referred to the Arkansas tenant-farmer as "the original forgotten man," scheduled an address here and made plans for an address here anr made plans for a conference with Governor Futrell to further the cause of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, which he described as "the only hope of one of the most desperate situations in America."

**Blame Agitators**

Demonstrations in Eastern Arkansas the past few weeks brought charges in the Legislature and elsewere that professional agitators were fanning the flames in the share-crop plantation problem, offspring ofthe war between the states with radical propaganda.

There were arrests and conviction for anarchy and barratry.

The Gooch bill, to punish sedition with imprisonment up to 20 years, went through the House in less than half an hour. Three weeks ago, a Senate committee pigeonholed it after a stormy public hearing. Senator J. L. Shaver, however, last night had it recalled from the committee and placed it in position for final action.

Describing the measure as "vital to Eastern Arkansas," Shaver today awaited his opportunity to call the bill up despite the last-minute jam of other business in the last expiring session.

**Call on Liberals**

Meantime, Acting Director William Cunningham of Commonwealth Labor College, Mena, called on liberal thinkers to "direct all efforts toward defeating the sedition bill in the Senate."

Commonwealth has recently been under legislative investigation for alleged Communist activity. The investigators yesterday recommended that any action of its personnel tending to violence, force or bloodshed should be met with prosecutions.

Chairman Marcus Miller of the investigating committee referred to Commonwealth as a wearer of "sheep's clothing" in a separate statement filed after the committee's report.

"Sommonwealth does not intend to abandon its fight against Fascism in the south, nor its efforts in behalf of the workers and farmers of America," said Acting Director Cunningham.

Thomas, 1932 presidential candidate on the Socialist ticket, has been invited by the sharecropper organization to go from here to Harrisburg, Ark., tomorrow, where a circuit court is to hear the appeal of Ward H. Rodgers, young school teacher, who was convicted of anarchy several weeks ago after addressing a tenant-organization meeting. It appeared probable that Rodgers' case would be continued

## FEDERAL PROBE OF TENANTS STARTED

### Survey Of 6 Selected Counties In Arkansas Ordered By Officials

MARKED TREE, ARK., March 14.—(AP)—As socialist Norman Thomas thundered against the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in eastern Arkansas today, AAA representatives and State emergency relief authorities moved to investigate at least one phase of the tenant-plantation system complained of by its critics.

Meeting without advance announcement in Little Rock, the Federal and relief officials voted for a survey in six selected Arkansas counties to determine how many sharecroppers had been displaced as a result of the AAA cotton-control program.

W. R. Dyess, State relief administrator, said the survey would be a joint venture of the AAA and the relief office, and that the AAA will furnish the director for the project.

Four of the counties to be surveyed were Poinsett, St. Francis, Lee and White. Thomas, traveling through the sharecropper district in behalf of farm unionization, commented yesterday that he would "ten times rather live in the New York slums than Poinsett County."

Today, he turned his guns again on the AAA, bitterly denouncing the Administration for withholding the report of Mrs. Mary Conner Myers, special investigator who made a first hand study of eastern Arkansas tenant conditions for the Department of Agriculture several weeks ago.

"The dogged insistence of the Department of Agriculture in suppressing the Mary Conner Myers report is dangerous to the last degree," he said. "We suspect the worst from this delay. Fear appears to be responsible for its being withheld. If it was not made public for personal reasons, that objection could be removed by substituting blanks for names in the report."

Thomas's eastern Arkansas tour ran into its first difficulty today when it appeared that a Marked Tree city ordinance prohibiting meetings in public places without a city permit would force a rearrangement of his program.

The socialist speaker called a sharecropper rally for the local public square tomorrow morning but Mayor J. E. Fox had not acted late today on the request for permit.

C. T. Carpenter, attorney for the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, said that if the Thomas meeting could not be held in the square, it would be moved to the outskirts of town.

Heading toward Memphis tonight, for an address there after a day of personal visiting with farm tenants, Thomas said: "Conditions might be worse other places, but I don't know where."

## Scott At Arkansas "Massacre" Marked Tree Cites Harlem Riot

### Co-operative Association Tells Robinson New York Agitator Should Stay At Home

Special To The Commercial Appeal

MARKED TREE, Ark., March 29—Replying to "warnings" of Norman Thomas, Socialist leader, to Senator Joe T. Robinson of a massacre in Arkansas unless federal action is taken, the Marked Tree Co-operative Association today telegraphed the senator calling his attention to the riots in New York City on March 20 and to say: "Massacre in New York might be possible; don't worry about Arkansas provided New York agitators stay at home."

The telegram in full reads:

"Local papers carry telegram to you from Norman Thomas, Socialist, broadcasting a massacre in Arkansas. Our organization has received excellent co-operation from both tenants and landowners in spite of active opposition by professional agitators such as Rodger Baldwin, Norman Thomas and so forth, whose activities take advantage of ignorance to create racial and class hatred.

"Work has been found here for all local unemployed who want work, and distress has been relieved by our own local people. We in our turn, respectfully request investigation of racial situation in New York where on March 20 in a race riot 40 persons were injured, one killed, 100 arrested, with thousands of dollars damage and shops looted, per United Press reports.

"Massacre in New York might be possible; don't worry about Arkansas provided New York agitators stay at home. We appreciate thorough understanding of our local situation.

"Executive committee,
"Marked Tree Co-operative Assn."

Meantime, there was no further sign of activity within the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. It is reported that Lucien Koch, president of Commonwealth College at Mena, and Ward Rodgers, agitator, under sentence for anarchy, left the city after engaging in a fight last week over how the $700 in the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union fund is to be spent.

## FARM TENANT SUITS RULED OUT BY COURT

### Evicted Sharecroppers Cannot Act Against AAA

### POINSETT APPEAL HEARD

### Injunction to Prevent Evictions Enforceable Only by Secretary of Agriculture and Attorney General, Justices Hold

By The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, March 25.—The state supreme court held today that evicted tenant farmers could not sue in Arkansas courts to enforce provisions of the AAA cotton acreage reduction contracts.

Such contracts, the court said in denying Winburn West and other tenants of H. Norcross of Poinsett County an injunction to prevent eviction, are enforceable only by the secretary of agriculture or the United States attorney general.

**Third Parties to Contracts**

Tenants, the court said, were third parties to such contracts and since no obligation was placed upon them they could not sue to enforce contract.

C. T. Carpenter, attorney for West and the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, would make no comment upon the court's decision nor would he say what legal relief would be sought in the union's campaign against alleged evictions. He was at Fort Smith today, conferring with an attorney for Claude Williams, convicted there of barratry in connection with a threatened relief workers' strike some weeks ago.

Carpenter recently asked the federal district attorney here to probe charges of eviction of tenants in Eastern Arkansas which brought Norman Thomas, Socialist leader

to that section in behalf of the union movement.

West's appeal contended that the AAA did not limit actions to those brought by the attorney general, but that a provision of the contract—'the producer shall permit all tenants to continue in occupancy on the farm rent free for the years 1934-35"—gave him a right to sue.

The court said, "Suits by individuals for violation of the NIRA have been denied by superior courts," and added:

"As a general rule, there must first be an intention by the promisee (landlord) to secure some benefit to the third party a legal or equitable claim to the benefit of the promise."

But, the court continued, the contract placed no responsibility upon the tenant, for he was left free to stay or go, and if he stayed, to farm the land. There was no promise in the contract to the tenant, it concluded.

The following opinions were delivered and proceedings had:

JOHNSON, C. J.:

W. E. Beaumont vs. J. H. Hamlen & Son, from Pulaski circuit, affirmed.

Hutson Motor Co. vs. Sadie Lake, from Jackson circuit; reevrsed and remanded.

Commercial Standard Insurance Co. vs. Mrs. R. A. Waller, from Pulaski circuit; affirmed.

SMITH, J.:

J. J. Shoptaw vs. R. K. Sewell, from Pope chancery; affirmed.

National Equity Life Insurance Co. vs. Zella May Parker, from Dallas circuit; reversed and dismissed.

HUMPHREYS, J.:

First National Bank of Gentry vs. Morgan McMichael, from Benton circuit; affirmed.

Ben F. Wilson vs. State, from Bradley circuit; reversed and remanded.

MEHAFFY, J.:

E. A. Simpson vs. S. S. Anderson, executor, from Jefferson circuit; affirmed.

Sovereign Camp Woodmen of the World vs. Mrs. Docia Law, from Miller circuit; affirmed.

M'HANEY, J.:

Tom McAfee vs. J. E. Nooner, from Garland circuit; affirmed.

St. L. S. W. Railway Co. vs. Mary E. Steele, from St. Francis circuit; modified and affirmed.

BUTLER, J.:

George M. Whiteley vs. Carl Lehman, from Carroll circuit; affirmed.

Winburn West vs. H. Norcross, from Poinsett chancery; affirmed.

BAKER, J.:

L. W. Baldwin et al, Trustee, vs. J. Neal, from Crawford circuit; affirmed.

Mrs. Caroline Martin vs. Street Improvement District No. 5 of Stuttgart, from Arkansas chancery; affirmed as to account; reversed as to order of sale.

ORDERS PER CURIAM

Grand Lodge Brotherhood Railroad Trainmen vs. Edward T. Cothran, from Crawford circuit; rehearing denied.

A. R. Nix vs. R. S. Ashby, from Clark chancery; rehearing denied.

City of Fort Smith vs. Giant Manufacturing Co., from Sebastian circuit; rehearing denied.

Ethel McIlroy vs. Hayden McIlroy, from Washington chancery; attorneys' fee of $50 and cost of printing briefs allowed appellant.

Allie West Baskin vs. Aetna Life Insurance Co., from Miller chancery; rehearing deniend; opinion amended.

Commercial Standard Insurance Cr. vs. Mrs. R. A. Waller, from Pulaski circuit; case advanced.

MOTIONS, ORDERS, ETC.

Frank V. P. Ellsworth vs. E. C. Ellsworth, from Garland chancery; cross-appeal to Peoples Building & Loan Association.

Sinclair Regining Co. vs. Homer Fuller, from Hempstead circuit; submitted on rehearing.

F. G. Taylor vs. Corning Bank & Trust Co., from Clay chancery; appellant given three weeks for brief of rehearing.

City National Bank vs. Jesse M. Johnson, from Sebastian chancery, and City National Bank vs. Wofford; submitted on rehearing.

Hettie Mae Purinton vs. George D. Purinton, from Pope chancery; submitted on rehearing.

T. L. Smith vs. C. T. Sullivan, from Poinsett circuit; advanced and set for three weeks.

O. H. Moberley vs. Mrs. M. L. Norton, from St. Francis chancery; motion to dismiss appeal passed one week for response.

W. J. Harrington vs. Lula Gillum, from Columbia circuit; appellant given 10 days additional for brief.

Mrs. Mary C. Grayson, Arkadelphia, Lyle Brown, Arkadelphia, and George B. Winster, Jonesboro, enrolled.

SUBMISSIONS

W. O. Hays vs. J. R. Hays, from Clark chancery.

A. M. Lund vs. Street Improvement District No. 2, from Woodruff chancery.

W. M. Bellott vs. C. B. Harris, from Union circuit.

Mammoth Spring School District No. 3 vs. Fairview School District No. 7, from Fulton circuit.

Fred W. Walton vs. Tom Davis et al as the Arkansas Construction Commission, from Pulaski chancery; advanced and submitted.

Criminal—Dr. F. A. Tyler vs. State, from Lincoln circuit.

Criminal—Charlie Crosnoe vs. State, from Bradley circuit.

IN ARKANSAS night-riding planters are threatening the very lives of miserable share-croppers whose living has already been taken away. It is a primitive and sordid war that seems scarcely to belong to modern times. In Washington, meanwhile, in the spacious offices of the New Deal such enlightened gentlemen as Henry Wallace and Chester Davis continue to ignore a crisis which the AAA itself helped to precipitate. On another page of this issue, John Herling gives a first-hand report of conditions in Arkansas. We are even more interested in an earlier first-hand report which was made at public expense by Mrs. Mary Connor Myers who spent several weeks investigating the plight of the share-cropper for the Department of Agriculture. That report has never been published. Technically, the Department of Agriculture may have the right to suppress it. Morally it has no such right in a situation involving the lives and livelihood of thousands of citizens whose only hope of justice seems to lie in an appeal to public opinion outside their own benighted area. The nature of Mrs. Myers's findings is already known. She is reported to have said that cotton-belt conditions are worse than those of war-torn Belgium and, further, that she could hardly eat her meals at night after interviewing hungry families all day. We challenge Secretary Wallace to publish Mrs. Myers's report; and we urge our readers to reinforce our demand with letters and telegrams.

## SHARECROPPING IS UPHELD

### Marked Tree Rotarian Blames Agitators From Other Sections

ARKADELPHIA, Ark., May 7.—Speaking on the tenant farmer situation in eastern Arkansas before the Sixty-second District Rotary convention here today Harry Wither of the Marked Tree club said the problem was not peculiar to Arkansas, but that this state is getting unpleasant notoriety because agitators from other parts of the country have picked Arkansas for the place of their nefarious operations. Eastern and northern Communists have caused much trouble, he said.

Mr. Wither said sharecropping was necessary under present conditions. He appealed for support of better education as the solution of the problem.

ST. LOUIS, MO.
GLOBE DEMOCRAT

MAY 5 1935

## NEGRO TO DISCUSS 'ARKANSAS FASCISM'

The "Farm Fascism of Northeastern Arkansas" will be discussed at 7:30 o'clock tonight before the Labor Forum, 1637 Jefferson avenue, by E. B. Kinney, Negro official of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

Kinney, who is here after an extended speaking tour in New York City and Chicago, where he presented the case of an estimated 12,000 members of the union, addressed the Association for the Advancement of Colored People in the Negro Y. M. C. A. yesterday afternoon and talked before the Interracial Conference in its annual meeting last night at the Y. W. C. A. Central Building, 1411 Locust street.

A long list of acts of tyranny and oppression by opponents of the union is claimed by its members, some 35 per cent of whom are whites, and all of whom are among the poorest of the Southern cotton belt.

## COURT RULES AS TENANTS BATTLE

### One Faction Wins Official Seal; Other Prepares Appeal; Preacher In It

MEMPHIS, TENN., June 12.—(AP)—Possession of the official seal and other property of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union late today was awarded by a magistrate to a group of Trumann, Ark., members opposed to Secretary H. L. Mitchell, and Ward H. Rodgers, union organizer and speaker.

Counsel for Mitchell and J. R. Butler, members of the executive council, said an appeal will be made within two days. The writ of replivin suit was instituted by W. H. Stultz, of Marked Tree, Ark., who was "ousted" by the executive council as president of the union. The council recognized Butler as president.

The Rev. J. Abner Sage, Methodist minister of Marked Tree, who appeared in behalf of Stultz, said "We feel that we have been misled by several outsiders who want to use their organization for their own personal benefit." He described the other faction as "radicals." Fred Stafford, deputy prosecuting attorney of Poinsett County (Marked Tree), assisted Mr. Sage.

After the court hearing, Mr. Sage said he and members of his church, as well as the presiding elder of his district, had sent a letter to The Christian Advocate, Nashville, Tenn., a publication of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, protesting the publishing of an appeal for aid to be sent sharecroppers in care of the Rev. Howard Kester, a union organizer at Memphis. Mr. Sage described Kester as friendly to the Mitchell-Rodgers group.

A letter, published in The Christian Advocate, which Mr. Sage said criticized Poinsett County officials and courts also drew protests from the Marked Tree Methodist Church.

The protest, Mr. Sage said, also criticized the publication of appeals through other Protestant church organs in behalf of an appeal fund for Ward H. Rodgers, convicted at Marked Tree last January on a charge of anarchy.

Attitude of the Marked Tree Church also was conveyed to Methodist bishops.

Mr. Sage said that whatever the results of the appeals, those affiliated with the Stultz group have received no aid.

### MR. THOMAS WRITES

To The Commercial Appeal:

A friend has recently sent me a clipping entitled "Busy Mr. Thomas," taken from your editorial column. It refers to the fact that I did not have time adequately to examine the books of a certain planter who, according to you, offered to let me see the books. I was and still am sorry that I did not have more time. I may say that the name of no planter was given me in connection with this invitation. I was simply asked to walk down the street where I might look at certain books. My time was so limited that at best an examination would be farcically superficial.

At a later date I had a somewhat extensive conversation with a planter in Memphis who renewed my faith in good intentions among many planters and who gave evidence that by no means all planters were making money. I never said they were. It is one of the vices of the plantation system that decent planters are penalized under it also.

I offered the Planters' Club of Pulaski County two possible opportunities in reply to their invitation to meet them. They availed themselves of neither. A possible earlier opportunity had been missed because a train wreck delayed connections. No planter has yet acceded to my repeated invitation to send in statements which would contradict the testimony of the accountant concerning certain planters' tactics, which testimony I cited in one of my radio speeches.

In general, however, I want to make this point. No examination of any books can justify the plantation system or AAA's conduct with regard to it any more than an examination of a slave holder's book could justify slavery. It may prove something about the individual planter, and that is all. The reign of terror in eastern Arkansas, the conduct of the mob of armed planters at Birdsong, the eviction cases which I examined, the starvation level of relief—these things speak for themselves.

NORMAN THOMAS.

New York.

Agriculture – 1935

General.

Labor Conditions.

# SHARE CROPPER OF SOUTH FINDS HE'S FORGOTTEN

Post

## Cotton Program Brings Scenes Like Wrecked Belgium In 1917

2-9-35

*By United Press.*

WASHINGTON, Feb. 8.—The Agricultural Adjustment Administration already on edge by wholesale dismissal of left-wing officials, today was presented with a report that its cotton program was bringing scenes like those of war-torn Belgium to southern share-croppers.

The report was filed by Mary Connor Myers, AAA legal official, and former Chicago justice agent, after a survey of cotton regions west of Memphis, Tenn.

The red-haired women who aided the justice cleanup of Chicago gangsters said conditions among poor tenant farmers and share-croppers were "beyond words."

**Wholesale Evictions**

She charged wholesale violation of acreage control provisions supposed to protect tenants from eviction.

The report of serious difficulties in the cotton program came with the AAA generally upset over the "purge" effected by Administrator Chester C. Davis. Mrs. Myers made her report to Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace. It was not expected to be made public.

What action would be taken, if any, was uncertain and the uncertainty was increased by thte shifting emphasis of AAA policies under Davis.

Mrs. Myers made an intensive study of social conditions in five northeastern Arkansas counties.

**Crowded Into Hovels**

She reported evicted tenant families straggling along highways, wandering hopelessly in search of shelter and employment. She said hovels were crowded until there was "standing room only" because families in slightly better economic circumstances had shared shelter with the evicted.

Some landlord planters, Mrs. Myers charged, have turned out their tenants without warning and influenced local relief officials to refuse them aid.

She exhibited snapshots of rough-boarded shacks in muck-mired fields, the gaps in their walls admitting bitter winds; evicted Negroes standing in the road, not knowing where to turn for succor; a truck piled high with bed springs, a stove, and ramshackle ends of the house hold equipment of a poor family.

**Like War Times**

Mrs. Myers characterized the scene as llike those of refugees fleeing war-time Belgium."

She blamed the situation on violation of an acreage control contract clause providing: "The least possible amount of labor, economic and social disturbance . . . (the producer) shall, insofar as possible, maintain on this farm the norma. number of tenants and other employes."

The causes of eviction are two, Mrs. Myers reported: (1) reduction in labor requirements produced by reduction in acreage and (2) ever increasing unionization of share-croppers to bring pressure on planters for retention of the customary number of tenants and for payment to the tenants of their full share of AAA benefit money.

Almost alone among the department's acknowledged "liberal" element left as the report was filed was Undersecretary of Agriculture Rexford Guy Tugwell, who testified before a Senate hearing on his qualifications that he was a practical farmer.

**'Firing' Nears End**

Davis said today dismissals were "about completed."

Tugwell, at present is in Florida, will remain to continue development of scientific and experimental activities of the agriculture department.

Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace explained the purging was "in the interests of harmony. It is, he said, "one of those things that happens in any organization that's driving ahead with great vigor."

"We're anxious now to turn our faces front and speed up," Davis said. "We could not continue straining for co-operation within the organization."

# *Southern Farmers Live Like War-Time Refugees, Government Aide Admits*

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7 (UP).—The Agricultural Adjustment Administration, already on edge by wholesale dismissal of "left-wing" officials, today was presented with a report that its cotton program was bringing scenes like those of war-torn Belgium to Southern share-croppers. The report was filed by Mary Connor Myers, A. A. A. legal official, and former Chicago Justice Agent, after a survey of cotton regions west of Memphis, Tenn.

**Conditions "Beyond Words"**

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**Refused Relief**

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# Mechanical Cotton-Picker May End Chorus Of Singing Southern 'Darkies'

GREENVILLE, MISS., Feb. 16.—(AP)—Delta fears are aroused in this mechanical age that the rhythmic chorus of the singing Southern "darkies" will die out at cotton "pickin" time from Carolina to California if the mechanical cotton picking device succeeds.

Those "glory roads" and 'Hallelujahs' of the cotton rows, wafted into song by the older folk of the cotton picking plantation negro and chimed in by the little "pickaninnies" are at stake if the claims of inventors prove their worth.

Some official observers of Southern agriculture anticipate a revolution of the cotton raising industry that will virtually wipe out the small tenant farmer and work toward efficiency of the big plantation if the mechanized cotton picking business proves a practical success.

Others say there is slight danger of wiping out this traditional foundation of Southern agriculture because the machine "just doesn't work like human hands" and that even if it should work the small cotton farmer would continue to raise cotton and handpick it for the seed which brings a good price.

But there lurks in the background under prospective machine picking an army of families among the negro race who rove down the roads from farm to farm during the cotton picking season, plucking the fleecy staple by the hundred pounds or by daily wage and who face this lack of unemployment if the machine performs their work.

It is at the cotton picking season that the Southern negro tenant lays by his crop and goes to picking cotton on the share plan or for the plantation boss, thereby earning money to pay out his debts at the commissary or store up his groceries for the Winter.

Since the invention of the cotton gin which separates the seed from fibre more than a century ago farm implement manufacturers have been experimenting with cotton picking machines, many of which have experienced more or less success for their inventors and many are in use today in cotton raising states.

One of the latest inventions is the product of John D. Rust and his brother, Mack Rust, who were born on a cotton plantation in Central Texas.

The Rust brothers claim that their machine during its final tests at the Delta Experiment Station at Stoneville, Miss., a few miles from here, picked 3,020 pounds of seed cotton in seven and a half hours, that it will cover an acre per hour and will do the work of from 50 to 100 persons down the cotton rows.

The average cotton picker, the man, his wife and children, it is estimated, pick from 100 to 150 pounds of seed cotton a day.

This machine is described as of simple design with an endless belt carrying several hundred smooth wire spindles which rotate as the belt passes over the row of cotton.

The spindles are automatically moistened and as they penetrate the plants the moisture causes the mature cotton to adhere to the spindles and to wrap around the spindles from the cotton burrs.

After this the cotton is stripped from the spindles and delivered by suction fan into a container. The green bolls and the stalks are not molested in the operation, its inventors say, and the fibre gathered compares favorably with hand-picked cotton.

The engineers of the Rust invention say this picker has been perfected sufficiently to justify production on a large scale and that it can be pulled and powered by an ordinary row crop tractor such as is used in the usual farm operations.

The Rust brothers dug back to the days of grandmother's youth in their cotton picking experiments. They recalled how she moistened the spindle on her old spinning wheel and employed that method in the contact of the fibre.

Agricultural commissioners of the Dixie states and farm experiment experts are alive to the possibilities of the mechanical cotton picking devices and comment variously on the prospects.

W. E. Ayres, director of the Government's delta experiment station at

Stoneville, Miss., commented that mechanical cotton picking would reduce the Mississippi delta farm population 60 per cent.

"There is no question that the cotton picker will revolutionize the industry," Mr. Ayres said. In foreign countries, he said, "especially Brazil where labor is not particularly suited for the growing of cotton, the mechanical picker would prove a boon to industry."

He said, however, that in this country where mechanical cotton picking "could be made successful there would always be necessity for hand picking on small areas."

Dean J. G. Lee, of the Louisiana State College of Agriculture, said the machine had been "used with some success in the Mississippi delta" but that it was not successful in Louisiana where he said "it just doesn't work." "There's nothing revolutionary about it," Dean Lee added.

"Machinery goes with progress," commented O. E. Van Cleave, Tennessee agricultural commissioner, "but under present economic conditions I doubt seriously if the widespread use of this machine at the present time would help the cotton tenant situation.

"Eventually machinery will revolutionize the cotton industry, but I think the welfare of the people—the poor people—should come before the machine."

Tom Linder, Georgia commissioner of agriculture, saw no prospect of the cotton picking machine revolutionizing the picking industry, in view of the crop reduction program which he said had "already revolutionized it."

Linder said the machine would not materially affect the tenants because they would continue to grow cotton for the seed.

"If successful," said R. J. Goode, Alabama agricultural commissioner, "the cotton picking machine will result in an immense change in our farming situation, tending toward large plantations with the elimination of small farms.

"Since the hoeing of cotton is the one great cost in Alabama cotton raising due to the weeds, the machine's benefit and the danger of throwing labor out of employment is less here than west of the Mississippi where the weed problem is less acute and picking is the major production cost item."

T. Roy Reid, head of the Arkansas Extension Service, gave as his opinion that the mechanical cotton picker was "entirely speculative." But if such machine is perfected, he said, it "probably would do away with some of the labor now used to pick cotton."

J. C. Holton, Mississippi commissioner of agriculture, foresaw "considerable influence" on the cotton producing industry by the mechanical harvesting of cotton "if and when perfected to meet the various difficult requirements confronted."

He pointed to the experiments conducted at the Stoneville station and the following bulletin recently issued by the station, reading:

"When mechanical picking is made possible, hand labor may be reduced to a minimum through the use of labor saving machinery in all production operations. Planters will be able to reduce their labor population at least 75 per cent.

"Mechanized cotton production, so much sought after prior to the depression and the distressing number of unemployed men, has been delayed because of the large element of human labor required for picking, and the development of successful picking machinery would undoubtedly tend to more mechanical farming operations and less human labor."

# The Tenant's Case

BY GEORGE MORRIS

In recent years, particularly, many tears have been shed over what is familiarly called "the plight of the tenant farmer." On occasions the tenant system is referred to as "peonage." The assumption is that if every one does not own a farm, this is the result of some grave injustice. The tenant is generously excluded from the presumption of lack of initiative, spiritlessness or the absence of desire to accumulate something.

Senator Bankhead of Alabama has prepared a bill which will permit tenants to purchase farms if they desire to do so. It is understood that the bill has the approval of the Department of Agriculture, and at least is assured of having no opposition from the administration.

The bill would provide for payments like rent. The loan would be amortized over a period of 30 years and would bear a low rate of interest. An agency similar to the Home Owners Loan Corporation would be established for making the loans. The loans would be made only to those who are now tenants. Only lands now in cultivation would be purchased. Only tenants of good moral character and who are dependable in meeting their obligations would be granted loans. Purchases would be made in the localities where the tenants reside, in order to prevent migrations and disruption of agricultural and social life.

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Certainly there are plenty of tenants and there is no lack of available land. The rate of tenancy ranges from as high as 72.2 per cent in Mississippi and 68.2 per cent in Georgia to as low as 4.5 in Maine and 5.3 in New Hampshire.

Of the 6,288,648 farms in the United States, 3,568,394, or 56.7 per cent were operated by owners and 2,664,365 or 42.4 per cent by tenants. Each succeeding census shows the percentage of tenancy on the increase. For example, tenancy amounted to 25.6 in 1880 as against 42.4 in 1930. It made its greatest increase from 1890 to 1900, when it rose from 28.4 to 35.3. From 1920 it appeared to be about stationary, but between 1925 and 1930 it rose from 38.6 to 42.4, with South Carolina the only southern state not showing an increase.

Tennessee, with 245,657 farmers, has 113,520 tenants; Alabama, with 257,395 farmers, has 166,420 tenants; Georgia, with 255,598 farmers, has 174,390 tenants; Arkansas, with 242,334 farmers, has 152,691 tenants, and Mississippi, with 312,662 farmers, has 225,617 tenant farmers.

What the practical result of the passage of the bill would be is difficult to anticipate. It is generally assumed, however, that some tenants would take advantage of the opportunity, but that the vast majority of them would continue their present status. One practical result may be anticipated. It would set at rest the charge that for some unexplained reason, as the Socialists and Communists urge, tenants are not permitted to own land. This bill, if enacted, would be the answer, if anyone thinks the charge is worthy of an answer.

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One of the most important factors in farm owning is not touched on in the preparation of statistics to support the bill. It is generally assumed that anyone can buy a farm on fairly satisfactory terms. What most persons would do with a farm if they had one is another question.

The tenant, transformed overnight into a landowner, would find himself confronted with the necessity of purchasing live stock, feed, agricultural implements and all the requirements for beginning a crop. He might, by some miracle, get together a mule and a plow and a few of the other essential implements, but he would then be faced with the greatest obstacle of all.

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So far as can be ascertained, the government which proposes to make the tenant a landlord on easy terms makes no provision for feeding the family and financing the operation until the crop is gathered and sold. The government may by the aforesaid miracle make a landowner of a tenant, but so far no miracle in the way of securing credits for cultivation and gathering. That is a financial matter. The merchant and the banker would have to solve that riddle.

In the first place the tenant has no background by which he could be regarded as a good risk. In all of his farming experience he has operated on the landowner's credit and not on his own. He has, as a rule, never had any credit of his own. It is not likely that the mere fact that his title has been changed from tenant to landowner, with nothing down and the balance in 30 years, is going to help the situation.

The Bankhead plan is just the reverse of the customary practice. Many farm owners grew from tenants. They accumulated enough in the beginning to become renters and furnish themselves. They established a reputation for reliability and industry. They bought land and had an equity to begin with and paid for it as they went along by reason of the fact that they were able to finance themselves.

About all one with familiarity with farming operations can see in the measure, which will be pushed with vigor, is an answer to the charge that some great conspiracy holds the vast agricultural population in the south in the tenancy class.

# New Cotton-Picking Machine Arouses Fears That Negro Melody Will Pass From Fields

By The Associated Press.

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The Rust brothers say that the machine during its final tests at the Delta Experiment Station at Stoneville, Miss., a few miles from here, picked 8,020 pounds of seed cotton in seven and a half hours, that it will cover an acre an hour and will do the work of from fifty to a hundred persons down the cotton rows.

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After this the cotton is stripped from the spindles and delivered by suction fan into a container.

## Croppers' Misery

Sirs:

The stories which the Caldwells, father and son, have told of share croppers in Georgia may, as you point out in your issue of March 25, be true of a biologically degraded 1%. The misery of share croppers in Georgia or in Arkansas is not confined to this degenerate minority. In Arkansas 410 spokesmen for families out of a total attendance at four meetings of 1,719 persons told me that they had neither crops to make nor jobs to work at. Food allowances on which from 10¢ to 20¢ on the dollar extra is charged are held to about $2 a week for a share cropper's family by the plantation owner. Houses are worse than poultry houses on well-kept farms. A family showed me relief which it was told must last for 30 days—there were seven in that family. Its stores consisted of 8 cans of evaporated milk, 5 cans of processed beef, one 24-lb. bag of flour, one 24-lb. bag of meal and a paper package of nondescript meat, weighing perhaps two or three pounds. This family—white, by the way—had just been dumped down by the side of a country highway, because a father had dared unsuccessfully to invoke "the law" against the riding-boss who had seduced and kidnapped his 14-year-old daughter.

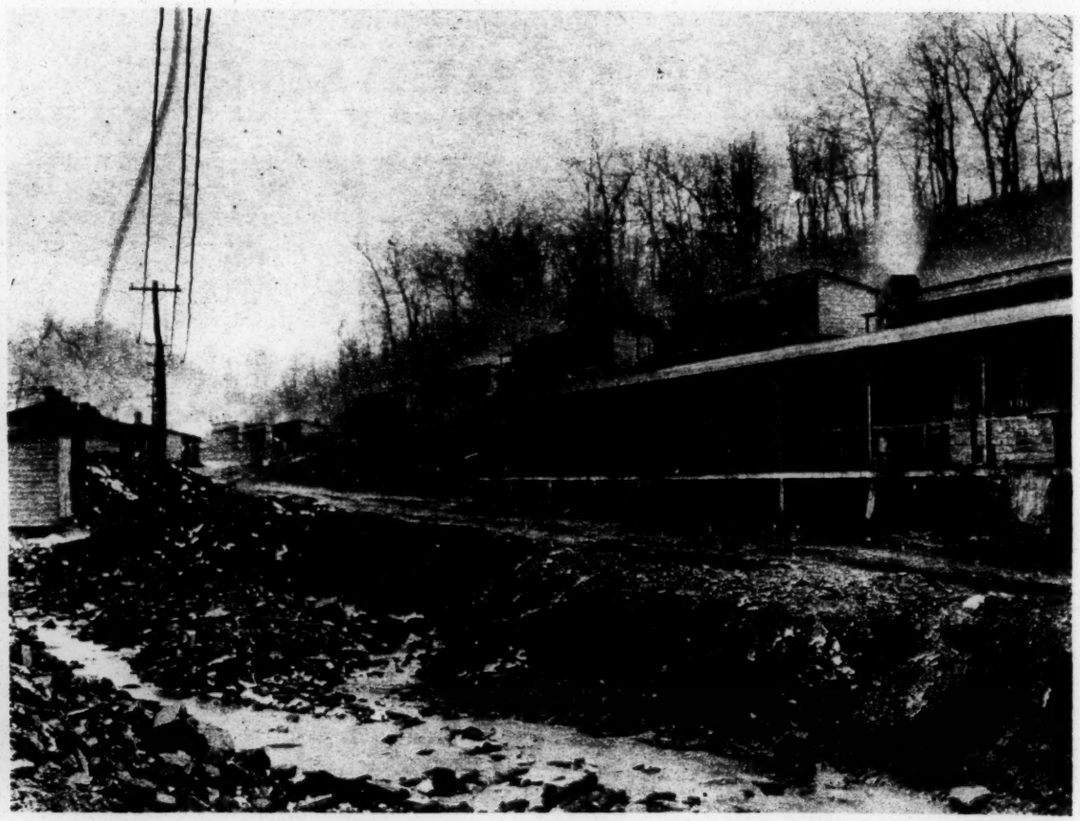
The plantation system in the cotton country is the most damnable thing in the U. S., and the operation of the cotton reduction program has added immensely to the woes of a large proportion of tenants who have been cut adrift or reduced to an even lower circle of hell as casual day laborers at 60¢ to 75¢ a day when there is extra work. The whole Administration at Washington turns all complaints over to Mr. Chester Davis, author of the recent purge in the Department of Agriculture, and ardent disbeliever that there is anything wrong in the cotton country, at least anything for which he is responsible.

NORMAN THOMAS

New York City.

Agriculture-1935 I
Labor Conditions

General



The Problem—A Submarginal Farm (Left) and a Typical Stranded Mining Community.

# RESETTLING AMERICA: A FOURFOLD PLAN

## Administrator Tugwell Explains the Government Program Aiming at Economic Security for Stranded Groups

*By R. G. TUGWELL,*
*Resettlement Administrator and Under-Secretary of Agriculture.*

ALONG a winding, narrow road out of Morgantown, in West Virginia, a wooden sign captures your eye. In black letters against a white background you read:

*LIBERTY,*
*Unincorporated.*

A short distance after entering the hamlet, set on a rugged hill, you turn down a deep grade and cross sulphur-laden Scotts Run. This mountain stream washes a large area of the State's mining region. The waste of the mines dumps into its rocky bed.

Here you are in the heart of a stranded mining community. Rows of weather-stained shacks stretch along the bank of Scotts Run and up the hills to the side. It is almost impossible to realize, even in times of economic stress, that such conditions exist in America. People don't live, they barely exist. They are huddled in tiny rooms practically bare of furniture. When night comes many stretch a blanket on the floor and lie down on the hard boards.

The Summer sun beats down on tin roofs. The heat inside is almost unbearable. Cracks in the thin walls are no protection against the blasts of Winter. As you approach, undernourished, frightened children scamper to their mother's side. Their faces and bodies are emaciated and hollow. Economic disaster has ground them down, dangerously impaired their health, robbed them of a normal, decent existence.

* * *

IN the general area of Scotts Run are 5,000 miners. Some of them manage to obtain a day or two of work a week in the pits. That will not supply sufficient food for a family, let alone the things that most of us regard as common necessities.

Even if the mining industry suddenly should revive, thousands of miners never could go back to regular employment. Reliable surveys indicate there is a surplus of at least 200,000 miners scattered in hundreds of Scotts Runs over the country.

What is going to be their fate? Obviously, these economic refugees cannot be allowed to starve. Obviously, they cannot remain forever in stricken communities. The human and economic sacrifice is too great. America's economic refugees thus are of primary concern to the Resettlement Administration. The problem facing us falls into four general categories:

*First*—Retirement of substandard land from production as part of a nation-wide conservation program and removal of the people to areas where they can become economically self-sufficient.

*Second*—Relocation of standard rural groups in self-help agricultural-industrial communities.

*Third*—Resettlement of industrial populations in suburban communities to improve the housing conditions of low-income groups.

*Fourth*—Rehabilitation of farm families in place, that is, chiefly by loans for necessary livestock, seeds and equipment.

* * *

ON every hand is compelling evidence of the necessity for economic relocation. Great sections of our population, through no fault of their own, have been reduced to disastrously low levels. Look at the relief rolls.

It is not alone in the cities and towns that the problem is acute. Millions of our people live in sordid, unhealthy rural slums or are engaged in the hopeless task of scratching out an existence on soil which has lost its fertility. Unless we make a serious, planned effort at conservation, countless other farms through erosion, by wind or water, will become barren and useless.

As a nation we have been wantonly profligate in dissipating our real wealth—the land. We have exhausted the frontiers.

The hope for future expansion of American agriculture and industry lies in raising the living standards of all the people. Naturally, the major phase of this development must be increased income. The people in the country's Scotts Runs, on dry farms, on denuded cut-over

lands, in hillside shacks, offer a vast potential market for the products of American factories. Here is a market at home we have hardly begun to develop.

In numerous parts of the nation tens of thousands of farm families have a cash income of less than $200 a year. Suppose by wise and humane readjustment this yearly average could be increased to $500 or $600, that is, trebled. Smoke would start to roll from factories now black and idle. Unemployment lines would dwindle.

But economic betterment would not be all. Think what it would mean to the national well-being in terms of health and happiness and broad social gains. The economic underprivileged of America, denied opportunities, are not equipped to adjust themselves in today's complex civilization. They must have assistance while on the road to independence.

The Resettlement Administration has no illusions about resettling the United States overnight, in a week, a month or a year. The forces of destruction have been too long at work. The problem requires patience and sympathetic understanding. Moreover, none is so wise as to be able to lay down inflexible rules.

What we hope to do is to make a start toward providing an assured and permanent source of income for individuals in substandard groups. An important method will be through cooperative agricultural communities. Let us look at one of the demonstration projects.

* * *

THE Resettlement Administration purchases a tract of land in a farming community. It is sufficient, say, to handle 500 families. That means at least 500 jobs must be available. The families are taken from areas where they are unable to make a living. They will come principally from relief lists.

A cooperative agricultural association, independently established by the families themselves, is formed immediately. The Resettlement Administration constructs 500 houses, of four to five rooms, attractively designed. The homes are located on a village pattern, that is, grouped together on ordinary-sized lots. In the village are schools, community halls, recreation centre, barber shops, stores—the usual buildings and activities of any small town.

In addition there are small plants and factories, operated by the cooperative association, such, for instance, as a canning factory, a furniture factory, a machine shop, a brick plant, handicraft shops. In other words, facilities are available to process the products of the farm and the forest.

Encircling the village may be the cooperative farm and the pasturage. The type of agricultural activities, of course, will depend on the location. It is desirable, however, to grow those crops which can be processed, canned and sold as one of the chief revenue producers of the cooperative community. But all the eggs are not in one basket. Income will be derived both from agricultural and industrial occupations.

Here you have a community which, in a relatively brief period of time, should be moderately self-sufficient. The members would be adequately able to make monthly payments on their houses to reimburse the Federal Government for its initial outlays. There would be money for food, clothing and pleasures. In village groupings of this sort, it is feasible to provide for as many as 2,000 families on each project.

For insecurity you have substituted security. For disease and squalor you have substituted health and normal living conditions. You have opened up opportunities where none existed before. You have converted a liability into an economic asset.

* * *

COMMUNITIES of this character will perhaps be subjected to initial attack from selfish, short-sighted groups, especially those whose rapacious spoliation in the past has contributed largely to the present human and economic suffering. However, as understanding of the real character of the resettlement communities becomes general a widespread acceptance and support of the work is anticipated.

The Resettlement Administration is fortunate at the outset in the broad, practical and nonpartisan interest and cooperation which its program has enlisted from all groups and all sections of our population. This is partly because the cooperative approach to solution of our problems, whether by groups or communities, is the antithesis of dictatorship and is typically American.

This is particularly true in that it does not put the government into competitive business but simply lends official support and cooperation with associations of citizens who desire to assert their inalienable right to engage in productive enterprise.

**The Proposed Remedy—A Model Subsistence Homestead Under Construction.**

While such cooperative communities will be subject to the controls of AAA on the basic agricultural commodities which they produce, the Resettlement Administration's policy of balancing new lands thus brought into cultivation with the retirement of submarginal lands from agricultural production will prevent these cooperative enterprises from bringing about a contradiction of policy.

Best of all, from the standpoint of husbanding our national resources and protecting the national credit, this method will save money to the Federal Treasury and to the taxpayers. Federal advances to the cooperatives will be repaid, whereas funds expended, as now, on direct relief do not return to the Treasury.

* * *

THIS is but one aspect of the program of the Resettlement Administration. None contends we can make more than a beginning in relieving the plight of disadvantaged farm groups. What we can and will do is to demonstrate and guide and help.

Withdrawal of substandard land from cultivation is not a new throught or a new effort. For the first time, however, this administration is trying to direct the movement along sane, common-sense lines.

It is a natural phenomenon with which we are dealing. Dead acres are going out of production anyway. The administration merely seeks in this regard to prevent the population retreat from becoming a rout.

All of us vividly recall the drought and choking dust storms and ruinous floods of the last few years. This year the destruction was unusually severe. Many are too prone to attribute the cause to individual farmers. They should not have turned parched grass lands into frugal wheat fields. They should not have overgrazed, wasted pasturage.

But how could the individual farmer, trying to eat and to live decently, have done much differently under the circumstances? And by the same token, how can the individual farmer do much to correct existing conditions? The obvious answer is, he cannot.

The retreat from substandard land must follow orderly economic processes, and, moreover, it has to be a cooperative endeavor. The problem has to be viewed and solved on a national scale, with the intimate step-by-step cooperation of State authorities.

The administration is not going to drive people off the land. None will be moved except on a voluntary basis. It will not be necessary to use force. The job will be to handle the vast numbers of people in backward agricultural communities who are pleading for newer opportunities, for a chance to help themselves.

It is simply not true that these families prefer to exist amid the poverty and destitution of their old homes rather than to move to more suitable areas. All you have to do is to go out to the substandard areas to explode any such theory. When the Federal Government purchases land for retirement and conservation, the inhabitants of the area will be afforded every opportunity to become established in their new surroundings.

It is a costly charge to States and counties to provide such services as roads and schools for inhabitants in isolated, inaccessible regions. The tax revenue does not begin to cover the expense of the ordinary community services. For instance, it is estimated that certain counties in Northern Wisconsin would save an average of $400 a year for every isolated family whose submargined land was purchased and who was assisted in moving to more profitable acres closer to population centres.

The work of the Resettlement Administration will not be confined to

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any particular sections of the country. The ills we seek to cure exist everywhere, in depressed coal regions of the East and Middle West, on dying cotton lands of the South, on dry lands of the West and Southwest, on the cut-over timber areas of the North and Northwest.

The remedial policies must be conceived on a broad national scale, with the program carefully planned and carried out in the best interests of all the people. We are all affected by economic sore spots.

New York Times
4-28-35

THE Resettlement Administration, by executive order of the President, has absorbed the activities of the Subsistence Homestead Division of the Department of the Interior and the rural rehabilitation work of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. Thus we start with a going concern. In addition, there are approximately 350,000 farm families being rehabilitated in place. It is felt that with proper assistance they can be placed on an independent basis.

During its operations the Subsistence Homesteads Division of the Department of the Interior made plans for some seventy homestead projects in various parts of the country. Work is now actively under way on thirty-two of the projects, for which $6,000,322.24 thus far has been appropriated.

The Federal Emergency Relief Administration approved thirty-nine rural community developments, and construction has been started on more than twenty. Four of the projects were retained by the FERA to complete construction before being turned over to the Resettlement Administration.

Several new projects, rural and suburban, are being prepared. Many of the projects transferred to the Resettlement Administration will be enlarged, developed into cooperative agricultural communities. We shall not proceed recklessly or wastefully. We shall go forward with the cooperation of State, county and local authorities. They understand the problems of the localities. Here in Washington we shall help. We shall not dictate.

Our fundamental task is to assist the President in removing 3,500,000 families from the relief rolls and keeping them off permanently.

## *MAPPING THE DRIVE FOR RESETTLEMENT*

*Associated Press.*

Rexford G. Tugwell (Right) and Assistant Administrator Alexander in Their Washington Office.

# RESETTLING AMERICA: A FOURFOLD PROGRAM

## Administrator Tugwell Explains the Vast Plan of the Government

## Which Aims at Economic Security for Many Stranded Groups

# Cotton Pickers' Strike Solid Despite Murders and Vigilante Terror

By ALBERT JACKSON

Secretary, Share Croppers Union

A reign of terror and murder is in progress against the cotton pickers' strike in Alabama that has only been equalled by the brutal murder regime of Hitler in Germany. Every vestige of human and civil right has been cast aside by the landlords and local police authorities in their attacks on the strikers. The local press has issued slanders and lies against the strikers and the Share Croppers Union in a deliberate attempt to whip up race prejudice and lynch terror to an even greater degree.

The Cotton Pickers' Strike was called openly by the Share Croppers Union to accomplish three purposes: First, to win $1 per hundred pounds for picking cotton; second, to win $1 a day plus room and board or two meals and transportation for 10 hours work on the farms; and third, to win 20 cents an hour, 40 hours a week, pay in cash on rural relief jobs.

As was clearly stated in the strike leaflet, the method of winning these demands was to unite all the workers, both white and Negro, to strike at the same time and to refuse to return to work until their demands were won. The landlords and the press have been heralding these simple demands as a "Communist call to rebellion." The starvation conditions that exist are only too apparent from the fact that these demands are more than 100 per cent higher than present wage levels, and in some cases as much as 500 per cent higher.

### Picker Shot Down

On Monday morning, Aug. 19, the strike started in Lowndes County centering mainly around J. R. Bell's plantation in Calhoun. Hardie Bell called Sheriff R. E. Woodruff and his deputies from Haynesville when the workers refused to pick cotton at 40 cents per 100 pounds.

Sheriff Woodruff talked privately to several of the strikers but could not persuade them to return to the fields at the old price. After he had talked to Willie Witcher he went into Bell's store. Witcher said he didn't want to hear "that kind" of talk and walked down the road to his shack. A deputy heard him make the remark and called Woodruff. Woodruff ordered Witcher, who was about 100 yards down the road, to stop. Witcher slowed up and asked what he wanted. Woodruff answered by shooting at Witcher five times, hitting Witcher in the thigh. The deputy also fired with a rifle. Then got in the car and rushed to where Witcher lay on the

ground and Woodruff jumped out, smashed Witcher over the head with his pistol butt yelling, "I'll kill you, you black son of a bitch." Witcher replied, "You might kill me but you'll never scare me." Then he was carried to the Haynesville jail. The strikers still refused to return to work.

**Murder Gang Organized**

Then, under the personal leadership of Sheriff Woodruff, a gang of vigilantes were organized. Among the active terrorists are C. E. Bates, Niel and John Barber, Don Cass (who also murdered a Negro worker in June), Ed Arant, R. K. Crenshaw, Geo. Hall, Will Lampkin, Bena Fredert, Ed Waters and Geo. Williams. All are deputies or landlords from the vicinity of Calhoun and Haynesville. So far they have raided more than six strikers' homes, pulled them out of bed, carried them about ten miles away and beat them unconscious and left them to die. Some of the workers were unable to wear clothes on their back because of the severity of their wounds. This gang waited at the home of Ed Knight, a union member, all one night and just before daybreak broke in the house and left a note saying they would kill him when they found him.

On Thursday, Aug. 22, this same gang met Jim Press Meriwether walking alone on the road and shot him to death without asking him a single question. The press reports said this Negro striker had broken away from "four armed men" and ran to a ditch to pick up a "single shot shotgun and turned on the four fully armed men." Only an idiot could believe such a story. It was clearly a brutal and heartless murder!

**Held for Union Membership**

Earlier in this same week, Willie Grove and two other Negro workers were arrested for possession of Share Croppers Union membership cards. Later they were released but Willie Grove was arrested again on the charge of breaking into a store in Burkeville. The storekeeper's name was Calhoun, a member of the gang that accompanied Sheriff Woodruff to make the first arrests. Without question they are framing-up this worker to railroad him to jail because of his union activity.

In the city of Montgomery the police have arrested Charles Tasker and James Jackson for "investigation." The investigation is about the identity and whereabouts of Albert Jackson, secretary of the Share Croppers Union. A Negro worker named Jackson, who has no connection to the union at all, is being held under the same investigation. Police are making every effort to imprison the leaders of the Share Croppers Union in order to cut off the leadership of the strike and carry on an even greater reign of terror to smash the strike and all other working class activity.

**Strikers Need Aid**

The landlords and police are aided the most by the Montgomery Advertizer, which carries rabid, lynch-inciting accounts of the terror, trying to place the blame for the terror on the union leaders, and shouting from the house tops that the strike is a "Communist rebellion." The editor, Grover C. Hall, won the Pulitzer Prize for his anti-lynching editorials several years ago, but when the test of his sincerity came he proved himself the most lurid lynch-incited in the state.

At the date of this writing the cotton pickers' have held their strike solid and are spreading it as the picking begins in other sections. Although the terror has not broken the spirit of the strikers, it must be clear to all that they need the immediate support of every person who believes in civil rights, of all who oppose fascist reaction, of all who believe the working population has a right to live.

**Protests Are Urged**

We appeal to you, in this time of bitter struggle, to give all the support possible and to enlist others to give their support, to enlist all organizations to support the striking cotton pickers as outlined in these proposals:

1. To immediately send protest telegrams, letters and resolutions to Governor Bibb Graves, Montgomery, Ala., President Roosevelt and Sheriff R. E. Woodruff, insisting that all workers arrested in connection with the strike or the Share Croppers Union be freed at once, that all terror against the strike cease at once, and that the workers be given their constitutional right to organize, meet, strike and to picket.
2. In the protests to Governor Graves and President Roosevelt, insist that Sheriff R. E. Woodruff and all Deputies involved in the terror against the strikers be removed from office at once.
3. Send contributions to the Cotton Pickers' Strike Relief Fund to Erik Bert, Editor, Farmers National Weekly, P. O. Box 540, Minneapolis, Minn., to be forwarded to the strikers. Funds are urgently needed for relief and to carry on the strike.

# COTTON PICKERS OUT ON STRIKE; GET PAY BOOST

## Rate Raised From 25c To 75c; Demand Dollar

NEW YORK, Oct. 11—The week-old strike of 15,000 white and Race cotton pickers in Arkansas, Tennessee and Mississippi has already produced substantial gains in the wages which Southern landlords are offering to workers in the field, reports the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

Before the strike was called, cotton pickers were paid no more than 50 cents per 100 pounds and as low as 25 cents per 100 pounds. When the members of the Southern Farmers' Union voted to go on strike a few weeks ago and the announcement found its way into the Southwest ,the wage level immediately jumped up to a low of 40 cents and to a high of 75 cents per 100 pounds.

To date reports from five counties in Arkansas indicted that the average price is 75 cents per 100 pounds with some landlords paying considerably more.

The Union members are especially jubilant since some of the most oppressive and hard-bitten of the landlords have come up to the 75 cent scale. The strikers, however, are holding out for their original demand of one dollar for 100 pounds

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## SHARECROPPERS TESTIFY

**Tenant Union Members Say Landlords Get Checks**

WASHINGTON, May 20.—(AP)—A group of southern sharecroppers and farm tenants testified today at an unofficial congressional hearing on their formation of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union.

The witnesses, including both white and negro men and women, were from Arkansas, Alabama and Mississippi. They were heard by Senators La Follette, Progressive, Wisconsin; Caraway, Democrat, Arkansas; Schwellenback, Democrat, Washington, and Representative Marcantonio, Republican, New York.

They denied charges they were Communists and complained against the operation of the AAA. They said that checks were paid to landlords instead of directly to them.

# Sharecroppers Protest Contrast With Landowners

WASHINGTON (FP)—Presenting a grim contrast to the prosperous planters and landowners who came in all-Pullman trains to boost the AAA, a delegation of poverty-stricken southern tenant farmers and sharecroppers visited Dept. of Apriculture officials May 17 to tell of the sufferings of thousands of their fellows from this same AAA program.

Led by Al Jackson of the Sharecroppers Union and H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, the delegates included a dozen Negro and white farmers from Arkansas, Alabama and Mississippi. They carried their tales of evictions, landowner terrorism and relief discrimination on account of union activity to AAA Administrator Chester C. Davis, Under Secretary of Agriculture Rexford G. Tugwell and Asst. FERA Administrator L. Westbrook.

"No Department of Agriculture county agents took up collections and helped to organize the tens of thousands of men and women who like us as sharecroppers and tenant farmers of the cotton south are losing our homes, are being denied the barest minimum of relief, are having our families terrorized and are refused the elemental rights guaranteed citizens to organize for mutual aid protection," the sharecroppers' spokesman stated.

"The AAA program has made our condition worse than that of any large section of the population. Under the administration of relief directed from Washington we are discriminated against and denied even minimum subsistence."

Mitchell described the pro-AAA gathering of well-to-do farmers as a landowners demonstration. "Those big fellows have plenty of money," he told Federated Press, emphasizing that their checks from AAA run into thousands and even ten of thousands of dollars. "Those who came from our part of the country included the largest landowners and officials of AAA."

In contrast with the rich landowners' big benefits from AAA, Mitchell pointed out, the sharecroppers and tenant farmers have been evicted wholesale as a result of the crop reduction program and have been terrorized by the big planters when they organize. Section 7 of the cotton contract which is supposed to check evictions "hasn't been any protection," he said. "The planters are on the committees that should enforce the section, and they refuse to enforce the provisions that might protect the sharecroppers."

# Bankhead Farm Tenant Bill Attacked By Liberty League

## Would Develop Peonage For The Government, Maintain, Say

WASHINGTON, May 19.—(AP)—"Russianization" of American agriculture into "a Government-sustained peasantry" was viewed by the American Liberty League today as a "probable" result of enactment of the Bankhead farm tenant bill.

The measure, by Senator Bankhead (D) Alabama, proposes a billion-dollar corporation to assist tenant farmers and other agricultural workers in financing purchase of family-size farms.

Terming this "a step towards socialization of agriculture," the League contended many tenants and share-croppers were not trained to manage farmers and that, unless the Government used harsh measures, these farmers soon would be living on "public bounty."

Another danger it saw in the proposal was given in these words:

"It is inevitable that political favoritism, if not outright scandal, would follow where large tracts of land, representing a liability rather than an asset to the owners under existing agricultural conditions, might be unloaded on the Government at excessive prices.

"There would be a temptation to locate land settlements at points where it would be most effective in influencing elections. . . .There would be opportunity for all sorts of petty as well as major graft in the handling of so large a fund."

After listing specific objections to various phases of the bill, which now is on the Senate legislative calendar, the League concluded:

"The support given by many members of Congress and by the Secretary of Agriculture to a bill involving as much as $1,000,000,000 and contemplating a credit policy which would not be tolerated in any private banking institution or even in any existing governmental agency, offers a disheartening commentary on present policies of the Administration. The public should be on guard against the dangers involved."

**Objections Listed**

The specific objections of the League were listed as follows:

1. The bill proposes without constitutional authority to authorize the Government to buy land.
2. It is a step towards socialization of agriculture.
3. It provides a subsidy to enable one class of farmers to compete against another.
4. It is inconsistent with other present policies in that it encourages new agricultural production by farmers hit by AAA restrictions.
5. It proposes to allow Government loans up to 100 per cent of the value of the collateral.
6. It makes it easy for farmers to contract new debts but offers no promise of improved ability to pay them.
7. It increases the contingent obligations of the Government by a billion dollars.
8. It offers an opportunity for scandal and political favoritism.
9. It is unnecessary inasmuch as rural rehabilitation is provided for in the four billion dollar work relief appropriation, if that act is held to be constitutional.

makes no distinction between landowners and tenants."

# TENANT DELEGATES CALLED "RADICALS"

## Promoting Class Unrest, Says Cobb of Sharecroppers

WASHINGTON, May 19.—(INS)—While a dozen sharecroppers from Arkansas and Alabama picketed AAA headquarters at the Agriculture Department today, Jully A. Cobb, chief of the legal section of the AAA, classed the leaders as professional agitators.

"They are members of radical groups which are striving to promote racial and class unrest," Cobb said.

"Many of them would not know a cotton stalk from a jimson weed." Cobb said if they had legitimate complaints the AAA would be glad to investigate, but added, "it is evident from the facts that they have few, if any, specific grievances."

"This," he said, "is especially true of the leaders, who are not farmers, and whose chief interest seem to be Socialism and Communism."

Cobb pointed out that Secretary Wallace and AAA Administrator Davis are advocating amendments to the AAA designed to make a home and landowner of the tenant.

"The men who are inciting discontent in the south have expressed oppsition to these measures," Cobb said. "Their actions indicate they want the sharecropper to remain a sharecrooper. We realize that economic conditions in the south have been bad and that there is room for improvement. The AAA is attempting to improve the economic status of the entire farm population. It

# Paternalism of Planters Benefits Share-croppers

*This is the third of a series of articles by Edward Angly on the share-cropper and relief situation in Tennessee, Mississippi and Arkansas recently appearing in the magazine TODAY, which is edited by RAYMOND MOLEY.*

BY EDWARD ANGLY

DURING my talk with J. O. E. Beck he, too, complained of the large proportion of tenants who are trifling. Screen their houses and they will throw dish water through the wire. To avoid having to stir to let the cat or dog in and out, some croppers cut holes in their doors. Yes they do. I've seen them. Rather than arouse themselves to fetch and chop the free wood, some of them rip planks from the walls, shingles from the roof. Mr. Beck told me of distributing fruit trees to his tenants to plant at their homes. In two years, he said, many of them were tying their mules to the young trees; others were letting hogs run loose and scratch themselves against the tender bark. Still others used the limbs for fuel. In three years more than half the trees had died.

"There is nothing sorrier in this world," Mr. Beck remarked, "than a sorry white man." Many a southerner agrees with him. Some of the Delta planters work only white croppers, some use negroes exclusively, others use both. At Tyronza, Hyram Norcross, the plantation owner whom the union leaders unsuccessfully sought to force, by court action, to take back tenants he had fired, told me that 95 per cent of his tenants were negroes until the war boom and the migration of the blacks northward. In five years he shifted to 95 per cent whites. With the depression he changed again, and now 80 per cent of the 1,450 mouths to be fed from his lands are negroes. Like the other landlords, he says he obeys the AAA ruling that he must retain the same number of tenants despite the crop reduction—but not necessarily the same families. It was on this difference in interpretation that Jerome Frank found the skids greased for him in the administration at Washington.

Down in Marianna, Ark., a hundred miles south of Marked Tree, is a planter who has known the cropper system since its birth, when the defeated and impoverished south began to build anew, after the Civil War. He is W. B. Mann.

"I remember," he says, "the day my father assembled all the negroes in our back yard to tell them they were free people and at liberty to move to any farm where they could make satisfactory arrangements. He told them it was his wish and his advice that they continue where they were and work the crop already planted. He said the farmers would have a meeting the following week and establish fair arrangements by which they could work to-

customers. And there are evils which appear in times of low prices and disappear when cotton climbs.

Over fried chicken and hot biscuits on a plantation near Tyronza, I talked with the manager's wife, a former school teacher. Their croppers, she lamented, had no amusements, and educational facilities were inadequate for both whites and negroes. "But try to do something about it." When cotton was four cents and no one there had money, she had induced the plantation owner to build a cannery in which she taught the croppers' wives to preserve meats and vegetables for their larders. Today, with high-priced cotton, almost the only two persons, out of the 1,500 living on the plantation who continue to use the cannery are the manager's wife herself and the planter's wife. Even assuming that all planters are greedy, you must admit, if you know the south, that most of their helpers are indolent. You can't cure that with a new set of rules and regulations. You couldn't even remedy it with a "share-the-greed" campaign.

**Landlord's Responsibilities**

Is all this paternalism bad, however benevolent at times? One landlord I met threatens to fine his tenants $15 in the fall if they fail to work their gardens through the spring and summer. Another docks the cropper a dollar should not in his garden Monday mornings, a time when this particular plantation has no [illegible] work. The southern landlord, like the Russian boyar, long ago noticed that efficiency among his helpers reached its ebb that day—and for the same reason. The "white mule," you know, can kick harder than vodka.

It is also paternalistic for the landlord to summon and pay the doctor whenever a cropper is ill. (The pay is later deducted from the tenant's income, along with the other furnish; otherwise, everybody might be having the "misery" all the time.) It is paternalistic, too, to respect an unwritten law that in off seasons the landlord must furnish some sort of labor for any tenant who wants to work at 75 cents a day. Perhaps it is paternalistic to deny free speech, as has been done where outlanders have come to Arkansas to harangue the croppers. But all the bookish logic in the world cannot budge the south from its way of handling its own problems, particularly those in which the race question is involved. That was where the ambitious young Socialist organizers at Tyronza and Marked Tree got off on the wrong foot, mixing the races at their meetings, addressing the negro as "Mister." In the south, that just simply isn't done, and all the Yankee "liberals" in the world won't be able to change the custom.

**Wrong Leadership**

I talked to the sheriffs of the two other counties which have drawn a "cordon sanitaire" around Poinsett. They said they would allow the meetings if the attendance were restricted either to whites or blacks; otherwise, never.

H. L. Mitchell, the former dry cleaner who helped organize the union, told me he made no racial distinctions. He conceded he had made no dent at all in nearby Mississippi or in Tennessee, although he claimed "six or seven thousand members," at 10 cents a month each, in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas.

He was full of generalities — all the big landowners were cheating. If they weren't, they would have gone broke, as the small owners did. The ultimate aim was to break them and divide the land, and so on.

Some day that may happen, but the present leaders are not the ones who are likely to bring it about. As I talked with Mr. Mitchell — who now makes his headquarters in Memphis—I remembered that stuffy day in 1932 at Johnstown when "Commander" Waters breezed in to make a farewell address to his disbanding bonus army. He was brimming with Napoleonic visions of some sort of rural organization which was to have millions of members, distinctive shirts, and plenty of pap from the government. Then, he, too, went to the city—to Washington, where he got a little government job, which he held for a time before sliding back into obscurity.

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# The Sharecroppers' and Tenant Farmers' Struggle Against Terror

**This is the second and concluding article on the meeting of the Tenant Farmers Union and the Sharecroppers Union in Washington, D. C.**

Daily Worker

**By Marguerite Young**

**(Daily Worker Washington Bureau)**

WASHINGTON, May 31.—Ralph Jones thought a long time before writing to Washington about his cotton checks. No telling what might happen, his neighbors said darkly. They had seen folks run out of the state, even lynched, for mighty small things.

"It was them cotton checks that started everything," Ralph explained. "I had just got in shape to take care of myself and my family. I was selling some vegetables and we had a good orchard. They just didn't like it, I reckon—"

"They" were the white man who held a mortgage on Ralph's land in one of the cotton states of the South, the U. S. Department of Agriculture officials and their kind. Their names cannot be given, nor Ralph's real name: they are still after him. He came to the recent conference at Howard University, here, with other unorganized farmers, and with sharecroppers and tenants, Negro and white, who are members of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the Sharecroppers Union. They told their stories between sessions of the conference, and these are some of them, stories of landlord terror and of the almost magical weapon—underground tactics—the farmers learned to use.

Ralph inherited two parcels of land, the 40-acre plot on which he was born, and another of 72 acres. It was mortgaged. He sold the big plot to clear the debt on the little one, but later had to borrow again. Today he is mortgaged for something over $350. His land is supposed to be worth about $2,000.

### Checks Help Up

At the end of 1934 Ralph paid up the interest on his place, leaving it clear for 1935. He had been trying for over a year to borrow money from the Federal government to pay off his mortgage, had spent $11.25 to have his land appraised, but had not received the loan. He rented another small plot for one of his family, agreeing to give a bale of cotton for that, and then they rented portions of both plots to the government under the Bankhead Bill. Two checks were due on each piece rented to Uncle Sam. The first checks came, but not the second one.

The rented land didn't produce a full bale of cotton—it was about 50 pounds short. Ralph offered to make it good with cotton from his place. The creditor refused. He wanted Ralph to give him $20 or $25 cash for "tags," which are required to sell cotton beyond what is allotted under the Bankhead Bill. Ralph didn't have the money. Finally he made up his mind and wrote to Washington about it. Washington sent the letter straight back to the Agriculture Department's county agent at Ralph's home.

The county agent did nothing for Ralph.

"So finally I goes to see him," said Ralph. "When I gets there it's a white lady setting in the office. She asks me what I want and I says, 'Nothing 'lessen you can get my cotton checks.' She says the county agent's gone away. So I goes home, and later I goes back to see the county agent. He says he wants to see me hisself, and calls me outside. It jest run through my head, then, 'He looks like he's gonna do something to you. But maybe he won't hurt you bad.'

"Then he hit me—like to hit in the temple—but I ducked. And he says, 'You damn——, get away from here and don't come back.'

"So I left. And then I met the county cotton committeeman, and he calls me and says, 'Ralph, I understand you wrote a letter to Washington about your cotton checks?'

"'Yessir,' I says.

"'Well, Ralph,' he says, 'this county's too small for you and me and Mr.——, the county agent. You better get out, or you gonna find yourself strung up somewhere.'"

### Gets Lynch Notes

Ralph had another letter, to Washington, in his pocket. He had written it, but feared to mail it. Now he went to see a white man with whom he had traded for groceries. Aroused by Ralph's plight, this man took the letter and said, "I'll be god-dogged if I don't mail it for you," and did mail it. Then Ralph went to the mortgage holder, traded all his stock for enough pennies to travel on, and left the state. He asked the creditor to allow his wife and family to stay on the place and work out the debt. But instead they soon evicted the wife and took possession of Ralph's farm. Indeed, they hunted him out, beyond the state, and demanded that he sign over his land forever or pay the debt at once, and again with a threat of lynching.

One letter from the landlord, which Ralph still carried in terror, read: "Ralph . . . —— and —— (the government officials) are anxious to find out your whereabouts and you are going to keep on with your dirt through —— (Ralph's son) until they locate you, and believe it or not you won't need but one more location then, as your last letter to Washington was too much for them. . . . " Ralph must either pay up at once or sign the deed surrendering his place, the letter said. It added: "You have only a few days to decide. . . . I have told you before we took any steps—I can't tell you what the result will be if we have to put everything in the paper—for lots of people want to know where you are."

Another letter Ralph still had with him—a letter bearing evidence in black and white of how tenants and small owners of the Southland are done out of their government checks. Written by a lawyer who also commanded Ralph to sign over his property, it said: "Mr. —— (the mortgagor) under the law due to the circumstances, has a right to take possession of the property, which he has already done . . . if you and your wife will call at the writer's office, I will have the warranty deed . . . for you and your wife to sign so that this matter may be clarified, and you can also receive your checks that are due from the government, as I understand the agent for the government is unwilling to pay them directly to you, but he informed Mr. —— (the mortgagor) that he will gladly turn them over to him and Mr. —— will forward them to you. Failure to comply with this request will send the checks back."

* * *

### The Croppers' Unions

Yet in the same Southland the farmers have found a way to defend their rights, even to make gains for themselves. It is organization. The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, covering five states and with a membership of about 8,000, and the Sharecroppers' Union, covering five other states, with from 8,000 to 10,000 members. Last year the cotton pickers of Lee County, Alabama, struck and won $1 a hundred pounds. Now they are striking in Dallas County for $1 a day for chopping cotton, or thinning the thick growth in the rows. Three to four thousand are expected to come out.

But how? How to keep a union together despite the terror?

"That's where your tactics come in," replied Al Jackson, the sturdy young organizer of the Sharecroppers' Union. He has managed to remain right in the state of Alabama almost all through the siege. The union was formed in 1931 as a result of a copy of the underground **Southern Worker** coming into the hands of a Tallapoosa County cropper's daughter. This girl determined that the croppers themselves could better their conditions, and wrote to **The Southern Worker** to find out about it.

"Sometimes the landlords really don't know we are on strike," Al Jackson related. "That is, they know it, but they can't prove it. The croppers just stop working. There's been nothing at all the landlord can put his finger on, though of course every member of the union knows exactly what to do.

"Sometimes the landlord, trying to make the cropper work, will be told, 'Boss, I jest ain't working today. You know, I think I might not work for some time. Unless I get $1 a day.' There is no strike committee putting up the demand formally—the croppers just don't work.

"We have family committees also. They go to the landlord simply as croppers speaking for their own family; and the landlord may get suspicious when they come, one after the other, but what is there to put his finger on?

### Must Work Fast

"They can, and do, threaten to kill anybody caught distributing leaflets. They post their stool-pigeons in the trees, with guns. But we have discovered these stool-pigeons long beforehand, and when we're ready to hold a meeting or distribute leaflets, we just get a couple of union members to take the stoolpigeons to church or to keep them occupied otherwise until the union work is done. We work fast. We have covered a county with leaflets in less than an hour, for each distributor has just a few and he is instructed to get rid of them within a specified time."

Jackson now spends much of his time in the towns, but, he pointed out, "There are some places where I go openly—places where the union is so strong that the landlords will not show their faces."

Most of the croppers and tenants recognize the landlord as a symbol of the capitalist system that oppresses them, and look forward to a new society free from them and from all exploiters of workers and farmers. At first most of them called themselves Communists, because these were the only ones they knew who were willing to fight against conditions. Now they know the difference between the union struggle for today's bread and shelter, and the Communist Party's fight for liberation.

"What really started to build our union," said Jackson, "was the excellent work of the I. L. D. It came in at the opportune time and gobbled up the confidence of the people.

That is, it came in when 32 union members had been arrested following the Camp Hill battle that cost the life of heroic Ralph Grey. Guarding him, the croppers lay in the cotton rows in the darkness and, when an army of 500 sheriffs, deputies, and vigilantes swooped down on them from over and beyond the county, returned fire. All of those arrested were freed. None ever was identified either as a union member or as a participant in the Camp Hill incident.

### Many Refugees

The nine representatives of the Tenant Farmers Union included many refugees from Arkansas. Beaten, illegally arrested, jailed, shot, E. B. McKinney, the Negro vice-president of the Tenant Farmers Union exemplified this. He said: "I'm a Tennessean by birth but I'm a Mississippian by accident, an Arkansan by choice and again

in Tennessee by force."

His home at Marked Tree, Arkansas, was literally shot to pieces by landlords and their sympathizers, armed with a machine gun. It is "no-rated" now, as the grapevine communication is called, that the landlord forces will pay $150 a pound" for him and for H. L. Mitchell, the young white secretary of the Union. They offer "$50 a pound" for Walter Moskop, the white-headed, blue-eyed Marked Tree tenant who tells of the beating of another union member "right on the main street in broad daylight." The attacker is known—Moskop named him to the local court—but the law demanded $50 for "court charges" before acting. While the victims were reporting, two strangers walked into court, tapped them on the shoulder, and snapped, "We'll give you just ten minutes to get out of town."

The beaten victim left. His wife, attempting to follow him next day, was waylaid on the highway and beaten. She too reported to the police and was told, "I guess you better get out too."

"Well," R. T. Butler, a tall Negro tenant from Crittendon county put in, "I joined the union in jail—I didn't get a chance to join outside. They slapped me in jail for just listening. I thought it over and decided that, in view of this, the union must be worth joining. So like Paul of old I became converted after praying in jail."

Sixty-seven years old, J. A. Allen of Twist, Arkansas, wore a sling over his left arm, his hand whitened and limp. He was the secretary of the local. Three times the riding boss came to evict him. Finally, after a meeting on an island in the river, they overtook him on a road. He made his way to another union member's home. That night he saw auto lights from all directions, shining through the woods. He fled. He walked 31 miles into Memphis in 10 hours, and found friends just before dropping in his tracks. He was sick. The doctor said it was a paralytic stroke from exhaustion and strain.

**"They Are As One!"**

Working in different territory yet cooperating by exchanging experiences, representatives of the two unions united here in action. They participated together in the conference. Together they visited government officials to demand protection in their right to organize and strike.

The Tenant Farmers Union is now taking its forces underground, wherever reorganization is necessary. Secretary Mitchell said his union is receiving "much help" from the Sharecroppers' Union. Organizer Jackson rejoiced in their unity.

"While the two organizations have no official connections," said the May issue of the Tenant Farmers Union's bulletin, "they are as one in their united struggle against their common oppressors — the planters and the plantation interests of the South. . . . Both organizations represent the toiling white and black farm workers of the South. . . . Both are determined that nothing shall divide them in their common effort to throw off the yoke of slavery and tyranny. . . . Members of the Alabama Sharecroppers' Union, the members of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union salute you!"

## *Brazil's Menace to the South*

An area equal to the cotton states of the South is already available for cotton planting in Brazil, and the work of development has just begun.

In the current issue of The Saturday Evening Post, Col. James E. Edmonds writes the first of a series of three articles in which he gives the results of his personal investigation of the cotton situation in Brazil. If anyone thinks the policy that has been pursued by the United States does not seriously imperil the one great crop of the South, which in years past brought in enough gold to support the national government year by year, he should give careful consideration to the facts brought out by Colonel Edmonds.

The title of the article itself is Much Obliged. It is derived from the candid statement of leaders in the republic beyond the Equator that the policy deliberately adopted by this country has dropped into the lap of a competitor the opportunity which is now being followed up on an intensive, almost feverish, scale.

Colonel Edmonds was born on a cotton plantation in Mississippi, where he lived until a young man. He has been engaged in the growing or marketing of cotton all his life. He knows the quality of various staples, the technique of every phase of its production and its distribution. Among other things, he tested the quality of the Brazilian staple and found that it was, in most cases, quite equal to the exacting demands of the cotton spinners for Great Britain, Japan and other countries.

He went to Brazil on a vessel sailing out of a Southern port. On board the ship were men experienced in every line of cotton production, spinning and marketing. Also on board were gins, cotton seed oil machinery and other requisites for developing the cotton industry in Brazil quite as efficiently as it has been done in the United States.

Colonel Edmonds begins by quoting Cully Cobb as saying:

> No, sir! We're safe! We know what we are doing. So long as we don't boost the price of our cotton above 15 cents, nobody's going to take our foreign markets away from us.

The time was back in January of 1934 and the statement was made to Colonel Edmonds. A little later, "one of the Brothers Bankhead" was quoted as telling a then "still spell-bound cotton-growing South," in substance, "other countries have tried it. It can't be done. There's only one place in the world where cotton like our cotton can be grown—a litle part of the Argentine and they haven't the labor."

The situation in Brazil has already shown that this was an optimistic view.

Colonel Edmonds is exceedingly temperate and judicial in his statement of facts, but there is a strong implication that the advocates of crop control in this country made a serious mistake in not attempting to get the facts even as they existed in the early part of this year when the official decision was being made as to the crop control policy for the next crop year. Scouts have been sent into Brazil and there they gathered facts which the proper committees of Congress should have had before them before arriving at any definite decision. Since that time the evidence has accumulated and it is folly to close our eyes to the significance of what is now going on in Brazil, not to mention the Argentine Chaco and other parts of the world.

What is now taking place, as the author of Much Obliged well says, not only concerns the two million cotton farm units of the South, the two million 745 thousand individual producers who were eligible to vote in the referendum of last December, or even the 10 cotton states, with a population of nearly 30 millions. It concerns this whole country, and if error has been made, as seems only too clear from what we already know, no time should be lost in correcting those errors before the South is pemanently deprived of the foreign markets where our one great cash crop has been sold for more than 100 years.

GENERAL

Agriculture - 1935
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# AS AN AUTHORITY HERE SEES COTTON PROBLEM

Commercial Appeal

*A student of cotton and cotton production for many years and one of the South's recognized authorities, Dr. Tait Butler, editor of the Progressive Farmer and Southern Ruralist, has prepared the following resume of cotton conditions and the outlook as he sees them. He is neither a producer, processor or handler of cotton. In another article Dr. Butler will discuss the cost of producing cotton in America and abroad.* 6-23-35

## COTTON ACREAGE AND PRODUCTION

Memphis, Tenn.

To what extent, if any, are foreign countries increasing their cotton acreage and production, and if so, are these increases due to the cotton production adjustment program of the United States and the government loans to producers of 10 cents a pound in 1933 and 12 cents a pound in 1934?

Foreign countries have increased their acreage and production of cotton during the last two years, 1933 and 1934, during which the cotton production adjustment program of the United States has been in operation. Both the acreage and production of foreign countries have been larger than ever before, but foreign production in 1934 was only 680,000 bales larger than in 1930. Foreign production during the previous 40 years has also increased faster than in the United States.

During the last 12 years five foreign countries, India, China, Egypt, Russia and Brazil, have produced 86.5 per cent of all cotton produced by foreign countries, of which there are more than 50. No other foreign country, except these five, produces as much as 500,000 bales annually. Of these five foreign countries, only two, India and Egypt, are large exporting countries. China and Brazil export small amounts of cotton, but never until 1934 did either export as much as 500,000 bales, when Brazil exported 584,000 bales.

Below is a table giving the acreage and production of these five large producing foreign countries and of the world.

**ACREAGES**

(In thousands of acres)

| | Maximum 1923-1932 | Average 1923-1932 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Acres | 1933 | 1934 |
| India . . | 28,403 (1925) | 25,141 | 23,854 | 23,407 |
| China . . | 5,707 (1930) | 4,759 | 6,142 | 6,803 |
| Egypa . | 2,162 (1930) | 1,782 | 1,875 | 1,798 |
| Russia . | 5,280 (1931) | 2,641 | 5,070 | 4,760 |
| Brazil .. | 1,941 (1931) | 1,506 | 2,520 | 3,400 |
| U. S. ... | 44,616 (1926) | 40,568 | 29,978 | 27,515 |
| Foreign. | 42,310 (1925) | 40,132 | 44,482 | 45,985 |
| World . | 86,700 (1925) | 80,700 | 74,460 | 73,500 |

**PRODUCTION**

(In thousands of bales)

| | Maximum 1923-1932 | Average 1923-1932 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Bales | 1933 | 1934 |
| India . . | 5,201 (1925) | 4,446 | 4,197 | 3,613 |
| China . . | 2,466 (1928) | 2,097 | 2,726 | 2,800 |
| Egypt .. | 1,768 (1929) | 1,486 | 1,777 | 1,617 |
| Russia .. | 1,840 (1931) | 1,106 | 1,778 | 1,940 |
| Brazil . | 793 (1924) | 551 | 969 | 1,338 |
| U. S. .... | 17,978 (1926) | 14,414 | 13,047 | 9,634 |
| Foreign | 12,189 (1930) | 11,195 | 13,478 | 12,869 |
| World . | 27,931 (1926) | 25,609 | 26,525 | 22,503 |

From the above it is seen that foreign countries increased their acreage in 1933 and 1934 over all previous years. Their production was also greater in 1933 than ever before, but their production in 1934 was less than in 1933.

It will also be noted that of the foreign exporting countries, that produce and export over 500,000 bales of cotton, India, Egypt and Brazil, the largest, India, decreased both her acreage and production in 1933 and 1934, below her average acreage and production for the previous 10 years.

The second largest exporting country, Egypt, had practically the same acreage in 1933 and 1934 as her average for the previous 10 years, but her production in 1933 and 1934 was higher than her 10-year average, although it did not exceed in 1934 her maximum production of 1929.

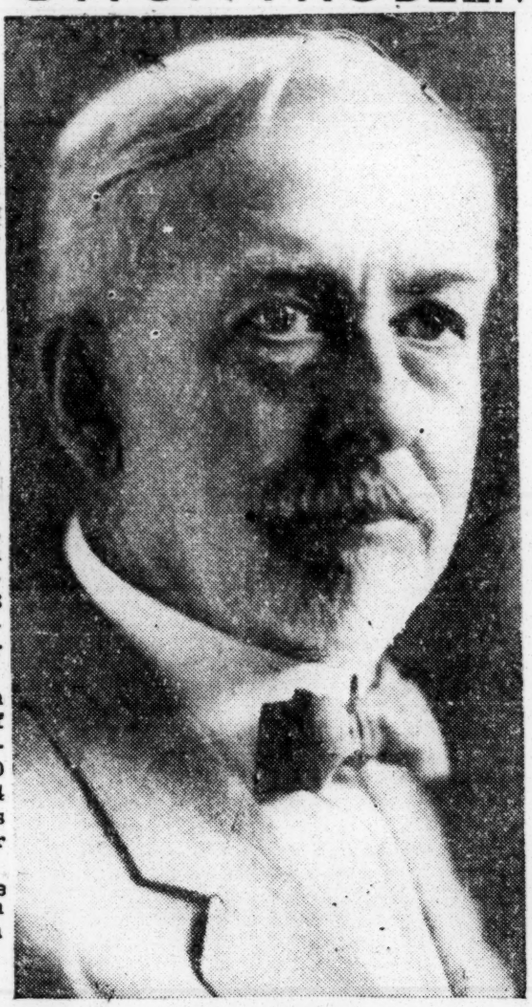
The other one of the three larger cotton exporting countries, Brazil, the smallest of the five largest foreign producers, increased her production in 1933 by 176,000 bales over her previous maximum in 1924 and in 1934 the latest available estimates show an increase of 369,000 bales over her 1933 crop.

**Clearly, therefore, foreign countries have increased their production since the cotton production adjustment program has been in operation in the United States.**

### The Cotton Adjustment Program of 1933

The cotton production adjustment program in the United States started in July, 1933. There is no country that produces more than 500,000 bales of cotton annually that is in the southern hemisphere, except Brazil. Therefore, all of the largest foreign cotton producing countries, being in the northern hemisphere, like the United States, had planted their 1933 acreage before our adjustment program, the plowing up of over 10,000,000 acres, was started. Hence, our production adjustment program of 1933 could not possibly have had any material effect in increasing foreign production in those countries. Rather, foreign countries increased their acreage, as a whole, for the same reasons that the United States increased cotton plantings in 1933 by 11 per cent over the previous year. A good or favorable season gave them their largest production, just as the United States would have had its second largest production but for the fact that we plowed up over 10,000,000 acres of our plantings, and thereby increased our income from cotton at least 75 per cent over that received for a similar sized crop the previous year.

The cotton growers of the whole world, including the United States, increased their acreages in 1933 for the same reasons, but not because of our production adjustment program. Cotton is strictly a cash crop, little or none of it being consumed on the farms where produced.



Dr. Tait Butler

Although cotton was very low in price, other farm products were as low or lower and less salable than cotton. Therefore, although low in price, cotton offered farmers, the world over, the best prospect of securing the ready cash which they were forced to have, and they increased their plantings accordingly.

### The Government Loan In 1933

The 10-cent govenment loan to producers in the fall of 1933 did not increase the acreage or production of cotton in 1933, because it was made after the crop of 1933 was planted, and some of it harvested. It is plain that the 10-cent loan of 1933, the 12-cent loan of 1934, and the production adjustment programs of 1933 and 1934 did not increase foreign production in 1934 over 1933, because the foreign crop of 1934 was actually less than that of 1933. The foreign acreage, however, was increased 1,500,000 acres in 1934 over that of 1933, and the adjustment program of this country and the stabilizing of prices by the government loans may have had some influence in increasing the foreign plantings in 1934. However, the increase in the cotton acreage of China and Brazil in 1934, of 1,500,000 acres, fully accounts for the total increase in acreage of all foreign countries, and the total foreign crop was actually less.

Because foreign countries do not produce as much cotton as they consume, the size of the United States crop largely determines the carry-over and world prices. Therefore, it is quite probable that a price of 12 cents a pound for the United States cotton under present world conditions will stimulate foreign production, but as yet our cotton production adjustment program has not been the cause of the increase in foreign production, although stabilizing the price of United States cotton at 12 cents a pound, by the type of government loans, which have been made during the past two years, will probably stimulate foreign production somewhat, if continued.

The dangers from foreign competition in cotton production have been much exaggerated during the last two years, just as they have at intervals during the last 40 years, but there is no question that foreign cotton production will continue to increase slowly as it has in the past.

II.

## IS U. S. LOSING EXPORT MARKETS

The United States will probably export less cotton in 1934-35 than any other year since 1922-23. In 1922-23 we exported 4,823,000 bales, and the current year exports are estimated at about 5,000,000 bales. Last year the exports of United States cotton were 7,552,000.

Below is given the average yearly exports of United States cotton for the last three years, five-year and 10-year periods:

For the three years, 1931-32 to 1933-34, 8,226,000 bales.

For the five years, 1929-30 to 1933-34, 7,625,800 bales.

For the 10 years, 1924-25 to 1933-34, 8,069,600 bales.

If our exports of cotton do not exceed five or five and one-half million bales in 1934-35, then during the current year we have lost some of our export markets for cotton, for this year at least. But that does not necessarily nor probably mean that we have lost this export market for cotton permanently. Our exports have fluctuated during the last 18 years between 4,288,000 bales in 1917-18 and 10,927,000 bales in 1926-27. If foreign production continues to increase faster than foreign consumption, as it has during the past few years, of course, we will not export as much cotton in the future as we have in the past. But it may be doubted if production would have increased any faster during the last 10

years than would have consumption, but for the world-wide business depression which decreased consumption by reducing the buying power of all nations.

**Foreigners Had Accumulations**

There are several reasons why our exports of cotton are less during the current year than for the years immediately preceding. Foreign nations produced during 1933 and 1934 more cotton than before, and a larger portion of what they used. During the three preceding years foreign countries took more United States cotton than they used, because of the low price at which it could be bought, and during the current year they are using more United States cotton than they are buying. The consumption of cotton is also lower than it would be but for the continued business depression. Countries like Britain and Germany and Italy, all large users of United States cotton, lost from 62 to 64 per cent of their foreign trade during the five-year period 1928 to 1933, and have had trouble in finding the means to buy United States dollars with which to pay for cotton. Since we have become a creditor nation and still maintain high import duties on foreign goods, it has become increasingly difficult for foreign nations to trade with us. Barriers to international trade, such as protective tariffs and quota allotments, and a growing spirit of nationalism among the nations of the earth have also had their effects. All of these conditions have tended to reduce our exports of cotton in 1934-35, but the increased foreign production, the lack of buying power of the people and the fact that large stocks were accumulated during the period of low prices and are now being used are the principal causes for the falling off of our cotton exports in 1934-35.

It is stated by exporters that the price, around 12 cents a pound, during 1934-35, has been a barrier to exporting cotton. In the first place it must be remembered that because of our depreciated dollar the price of cotton has not been 12 cents a pound to foreign countries, and moreover, in 1928-29, with cotton at 18 cents a pound we exported 8,044,000 bales.

In view of all these facts is it not safe to conclude that the records of foreign cotton production and consumption and of our exports, for the past 10 to 20 years, is a better index of what our exports will be in the future than the exports during a part of the current year? If this be true, we have not permanently lost our foreign markets for cotton, although we may not in the future supply foreign countries with as large a portion of what they use. In short, there is no sound reason for becoming panicky about the possible loss of our export markets for cotton, for the 5,000,000 bales to be exported in 1934-35 will bring us more money than the 8,708,000 bales exported during 1931-32 when the average price of our cotton was 5.7 cents a pound —about $50,000,000 more.

Can anyone give a sane reason why southern farmers should produce 3,708,000 additional bales of cotton and virtually add $50,000,000 and give all this to foreign countries for the sake of maintaining a large export market for cotton? We have lost the unprofitable part of our export markets for cotton, at least during the last year, but since what we have retained has brought us more money and much more profit and buying power, why should southern cotton producers be panicky or down-hearted—they are not.

**NEW YORK TIMES**

JUL 25

# METHODIST SURVEY ATTACKS THE AAA

## Finds Cotton Reduction Policy Has Aggravated Plight of the Share-Cropper.

## SEES OWNERS ENRICHED

## Federation for Social Service Also Reports Reign of Terror Against Farm Workers.

Charges that the cotton reduction policies of the AAA were steadily aggravating the plight of the tenant farmer and share cropper while enriching the landlords were made yesterday by the Methodist Federation for Social Service on the basis of a survey conducted in the cotton producing area.

The survey was made by Professor Harry F. Ward of the Union Theological Seminary and Miss Winifred L. Chappell, both secretaries of the federation, and a report covering the findings was published under the title "Cotton Production: Another Example of Capitalist Decline."

"The economic conditions of cotton workers has grown steadily worse under the cotton acreage reduction program," the report set forth. "The numerically small landlord class, Southern plantation owners and also Northern industrial corporations which own huge plantations—has reaped the benefits.

**Big Plantations Benefit.**

"Many of the big plantation owners are pleased with the immediate results. These were represented among the 4,000 farmers who 'marched' to Washington in Pullman cars and automobiles in mid-May to endorse the AAA. Among them were 172 landlords from Arkansas alone, and from Alabama at least one big plantation owner, whose share-croppers, hundreds of them, have received no AAA parity payments."

The report included, as examples of what has actually happened, these instances:

"The preacher at Shuqualak, Miss., says that the landlord on a plantation with 200 cropper families, all members of his church, had these plow up their cotton. When the government sent the checks, the landlord held them. He told the croppers that they would have to have a trustee sign for them to get the checks cashed. But they have not seen the money or the check.

"The preacher at Ittabena tells of two of his members who plowed up the allotted number of acres and got their government checks. But the landlord made them give them up, also took their crops on so-called debts. He said the furnisher had first choice and the renter last, if any. None was left."

**Reign of Terror Charged.**

A reign of terror has been instituted by the landlords to hold down any effort on the part of the croppers to organize and obtain benefits due them, the report stated.

"The plantation owners have been back of an organized reign of terror by night riders and county officials against the Arkansas union members," the report declared. Union meetings have been broken up by mobs; leaders, including some Negro preachers, have been beaten, arrested, held in jail for days without trial; the home of a union officer has been riddled with bullets while his family was inside; an armed band of vigilantes shot into a Negro church; another one attacked a large group of men, women and children returning from church."

The report also commented on the Bankhead bill called the Farm Tenants' Home Corporation Bill, which would provide $1,000,000,000 to be lent to tenant farmers to purchase farms and equipment on a thirty to fifty year mortgage.

"The critics of the bill say," according to the report, "that the landlord will see to it that the tracts the government buys will be poor ones on which the cropper has not been able to get a living; that the bill does not designate how much land each farmer may have; that no provision is made for new houses; that no provision is made against Negro discrimination; that under its terms crops raised are not to compete with commercial crops; that is, the cropper must be a truck farmer. But for this he has no skill or knowledge.

"Thus the attempt to preserve the profit system is leading to the abandonment of the American ideal of a progressive countryside sharing the good life with the modern urban community."

COTTON PICKERS ON STRIKE in Alabama—they are demanding a dollar for picking a hundred pounds of cotton—report eight known deaths among the members of the Share-Croppers' Union. Numerous persons are missing, many have been beaten, and about a hundred are in jail. In Arkansas, where the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, several thousand strong, called a strike beginning September 23, three men and one woman were jailed on the day the strike began "for agitating a strike of cotton pickers." The prisoners have not been allowed to communicate with union officials or attorneys and they will probably be charged with violating an Arkansas law against "inciting labor" which is designed to defeat just such movements as the present strike. In Arkansas, too, the demand for which the croppers are taking their lives and liberties into their hands is for one dollar a hundred pounds. Our readers are already familiar with the unbelievable conditions of poverty and terror under which the Southern cotton pickers live. They know too that the strikers in both Alabama and Arkansas need support and help of every sort. At this particular time we urge that telegrams and letters be sent to Governor Bibb Graves at Montgomery, Alabama, and to Sheriff C. H. Wilson at Blytheville, Arkansas, protesting against the denial of civil rights and the outright gun play with which the cotton pickers' strike is being literally beaten down. Such protests do carry weight. In Birmingham the cases of Robert Wood and R. F. Hall, charged with violating the infamous Downs ordinance, have been dismissed for lack of evidence; in Bessemer, Alabama, Ed Sears, a Negro, sentenced to ten months on the Alabama chain gang and a fine of $100, has been freed by Judge Gardner Goodwin of the Circuit Court, who ruled the ordinance unconstitutional. The croppers can scarcely hope to come off with their lives, let alone obtain their meager demands, without outside help.

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General

**MOBILE, ALA.**
**REGISTER**

FEB 6 1935

## Cotton Picker

That American Mercury article on the mechanical cotton picker, from which The Press Register reprinted liberal extracts not long ago, has aroused considerable speculation, some optimism and no little alarm.

It would, of course, be false to paint a picture of the cotton kingdom as aloof from the encroachments of the machine. As a matter of record, cotton planting was one of the first forms of agriculture to be vitally affected by what is loosely referred to as the industrial revolution. The cotton kingdom would never have grown to its immense size had it not been for Eli Whitney's celebrated invention.

It is true, though, that since that time cotton has been less affected by the machine than other agricultural pursuits. This has been so primarily because of the failure of the inventors to produce a practicable cotton picker. The labor of thousands of humble field hands has thus continued to be the foundation of the cotton kingdom. The machine has been excluded from a primary step in the process.

If the machine which the American Mercury writer, Mr. Oliver Carlson, has described is a success, there is no doubt but that the south is headed for sweeping changes in its economic system. And the unhappy but salient fact is that at this juncture none of us can tell whether the change will be for the better. Uultimately it should be, but as has been the case in other industries the initial stages of the change are likely to be tragic.

The displacement of men by the machine has often led to tragedy in the past. But many times the displacement has come in a period when the removed workers could be absorbed in some other industry. If the cotton picker should be put into use in the immediate future, what will become of the former field hands is not pleasant to contemplate.

There are still some 10 millions of men and women out of work. Barring war there is not much reason to expect that this enormous surplus can be put back to work overnight. In 1929, even, this country had some two million unemployed.

The negroes who are principally used as cotton pickers are unskilled laborers. Under the most favorable circumstances they would be hard put to it to adapt themselves to other work. As things stand now they would nearly all of them have to go on relief.

The announcement of a perfected mechanical cotton picker is accordingly as much threat as promise. It reminds us that our generation has nowhere approached the conquest of the machine. It is still our master when it should be our slave.

The fault is not the machine's, of course. It is ours wholly. If it were not for this failure of ours to learn to use wisely what we ourselves have wrought, the south could greet the appearance of a mechanical picker with complete confidence and hope. As it is, the thoughtful among us are troubled. We are being forced once again to consider modern man's greatest failure.

**Winston Salem, N. C.**
**JOURNAL**

FEB 15 1935

## *Landlord and Tenant*

Judge Frank A. Daniels, presiding over superior court at Wilson, has ruled in favor of the seventh section of the government's acreage contract which has to do with the landlord's retaining on his farm for 1935 the same tenants he had in 1934. The charge has sprung up that landlords are attempting to displace their old tenants and replace them with relatives in some instances.

Human nature being what it is, there has been some expectation that landlords would in some instances attempt to abuse the acreage contracts, as well as the government seed loan contracts. One writer claims that Negro tenants securing loans from the government in Alabama have been deprived of their checks by the landlords, who took over the government loans, bought supplies at cash prices and sold them to the tenants at credit prices. In some cases wherein the checks fell into the hands of the tenants themselves through some error or mischance, the latter have discovered that they have "repaid" government loans that they never had any knowledge of, it is contended.

Close supervision of matters pertaining to loans and government contracts may be essential to prevent the cheating and exploitation of ignorant tenants, especially in those sections where it is claimed that "peonage" thrives. The whole AAA program may fall down unless its provisions are enforced within the letter and spirit of the law.

There are instances in which a good landlord may act to protect the interests of an illiterate tenant, but such action should be distinguished from that of the exploiter.

Daily
Chapel Hill N.C.

FEB 22 1935

## A Mechanical Cotton-Picker

(*Elizabeth City Independent*)

Millions of poor whites and Negroes who are dependent upon the South's cotton crop for work will in all probability be displaced and evicted within the next two years by a revolutionary labor-saving invention, the facts about which have had very little publicity. American inventive genius has at last perfected a relatively cheap, simple and effective method of picking cotton by machinery that will eventually displace every human cotton picker in the South and Southwest.

The cotton crop has been unique in that its mass production did not interfere with the small operator. No matter how many acres of cotton in a plantation, a family was required for every so many acres because of the labor involved in picking the crop. The new mechanical cotton picker, we are told, will enable the big plantations to produce cotton profitably at five cents a pound, a price at which the small cotton farmers will be forced to abandon their cotton acres and the growing of cotton will be confined to immense plantations where the cotton picking machine can be profitably used.

And so we are being forced nearer and nearer to that day when government must nationalize all industry in the interest of all of its people. The day when taxes can support our unemployed and pay the interest on our enormous debt burden is drawing to a close.

INDEPENDENT
Elizabeth City
FEB 15 1935

## A Horrible Picture

MUST see now what the AAA Cotton Control program is doing to thousands of poor tenant farmers and share-croppers in the farther south. Indisputable facts are available thru the recent report of Mrs. Mary Connery Myers, AAA legal official and former agent of the U. S. Department of Justice, who has made a first hand study of conditions in Arkansas. I quote from a United Press report of Mrs. Myers' findings:

**Mrs. Myers made an intensive study of social conditions in five northeastern Arkansas counties.**

**"She reported evicted tenant farmer families straggling along highways, wandering hopelessly in search of shelter and employment. She said hovels were crowded until there was 'standing room only', because families in slightly better economic circumstances had shared shelter with the evicted.**

**Some landlord planters, Mrs. Myers charged, have turned out their tenants without warning and influenced local relief officials to refuse them aid.**

**"She exhibited snapshots of rough-boarded shacks in muck-mired fields, the gaps in their walls admitting bitter winds; evicted Negroes standing in the road, not knowing where to turn for succor; a truck piled high with bed springs, a stove, and ram-shackled ends of the household equipment of a poor family.**

**"Mrs. Myers characterized the scenes as 'like those of refugees fleeing war-time Belgium.'**

**"She blamed the situation on violation of an acreage control contract clause providing: The least possible amount of labor, economic and social disturbance * * * (the producer) shall, insofar as possible, maintain on this farm the normal number of tenants and other employes'."**

The sad part about it all is, that nothing the AAA can do about it will help matters for more than one or two years. It will come as news to many readers of this newspaper that millions of poor Whites and Negroes who are dependent upon the south's cotton crop for work will in all probability be displaced and evicted within the next two years by a revolutionary labor-saving invention, the facts about which have had very little publicity. American inventive genius has at last perfected a relatively cheap, simple and effective method of picking cotton by machinery that will eventually displace every human cotton picker in the south and southwest.

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## The Plight of the Share-Croppers

EDITOR THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY:

SIR: As the Roosevelt administration swings farther to the right, and the cotton control section of the AAA becomes increasingly dominated by reactionary representatives of southern cotton planters and landlords, tenant farmers, day-laborers and share-croppers in Arkansas and the cotton states generally are driven deeper and deeper into economic misery and despair. Since the arrest and conviction of Ward H. Rodgers, on the charge of "anarchy," in a court in Poinsett county composed mainly of planters and deputy sheriffs, a reign of terror has been inaugurated throughout the northeastern section of Arkansas to destroy the Southern Tenant Farmers' union, the only weapon the exploited and disinherited share-croppers have with which to struggle for their rights.

Hundreds of eviction notices have been served on the defenseless and helpless share-croppers and scores have been forcibly removed from their miserable shanties with no place to go. A widespread movement is on foot by the planters to: (1) smash the Southern Tenant Farmers' union, through evictions and terroristic methods, (2) to supplant share-croppers with day laborers, with a 60 cent per day wage, (3) to stir up racial feelings between Negroes and whites, and (4) to prevent union members from getting relief for their starving and naked families.

Our organizers have been beaten and mobbed. The mob which beat up Lucien Koch, of Commonwealth college, carried a rope with which to hang him, but lost it on the road. The rope, with a hangman's knot in it, was later picked up by a rescue party composed of share-croppers. Our meetings have been invaded and broken up by armed planters, deputies and sheriffs. Powers Hapgood, a member of the national executive committee of the socialist party, narrowly missed being lynched by a group of drunken planters at Birdsong, in Mississippi county. Many northeastern Arkansas towns have passed ordinances prohibiting meetings of any sort. Sheriffs have refused to give us protection, but instead have threatened to lynch our leaders. Scores of people are being thrown upon the highway with no place wherever to go. Union members are blacklisted and cannot get access to any land whatever. We have appealed to Governor Futrell, at Little Rock, for tents to establish temporary refugee camps, but have been rebuffed. Secretary Wallace has refused us permission to use government rented land to establish tent colonies.

Under the capable and intelligent leadership of H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers' union, with a membership of more than five thousand Negro and white share-croppers, the union is carrying on its organizational activities in the face of almost insurmountable difficulties. For the defense of Ward Rodgers, who is being tried on the charge of "anarchy," for the defense of union organizers, who have been arrested for organizing share-croppers, for the filing of suits, injunctions, etc., and for the fees of C. T. Carpenter, attorney of Marked Tree, money is badly needed. The union itself has no money at all. Today we are out of union cards, stationery, and have scarcely money enough to buy gasoline. We need $5,000 to carry our fight to a successful conclusion. The S.T.F.U. is the most important movement among the oppressed cotton workers in the entire south. It recognizes no color line and, probably for the first time since reconstruction, white and Negro farm workers are solidly united against their common enemy, the planters and landlords. Those who want to share in this significant struggle should send all contributions to Norman Thomas, 112 East 19th street, New York city.

Marked Tree, Ark. HOWARD KESTER.

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Agriculture - 1935
Labor Conditions.

General.

## NEW BANKHEAD BILL PROPOSES FAKE BENEFIT TO SHARECROPPERS

WASHINGTON, D.C. - (CNA) - Although much praise has been showered on the proposed "Farm Tenant Home Act of 1935" by administration supporters, a well-informed source declared that even if the dispossessed sharecroppers are given land, they will not be able to produce crops for market. Crusader news agency 308 west 14th St, New York 4-6-35

### Crop Limitation Joker

To substantiate this assertion, it quotes a sub-section of the bill which states: "Special effort shall be made by the Corporation (Farm Tenant Homes Corp. to be set up by the bill - ed.) to avoid... the expansion of production for the market of crops as to which there exists a sufficient supply".

The bill is proposed by Senator Bankhead (white), author of the notorious congressional legislation which compels sharecroppers and tenant farmers to plow under a considerable part of their cotton crops.

### Added Debt Burden

The present bill provides for a bond issue of a billion dollars to enable the government to buy blocks of poor farm land from planters, eastern insurance companies and Federal Land Banks. The dispossessed sharecroppers would then purchase land from the government on credit.

They would thus undertake a new debt, to extend over two generations, and incidentally relieve the former landowners of the burden of taxation. Though the sharecroppers are not to grow for the market, the bill does not state how the yearly payments are to be met. the above source states.

## *Bankhead Tenant Bill Would Bring Widespread Relief, Holds Holleman*

Editor Constitution: There is consternation now throughout the country over the plight of tenants in the cotton states. Only one other state has a higher percentage, and that is Mississippi, with 72.2 per cent.

In September, 1914—a little more than 20 years ago—you published an article from my pen dealing with this very matter. That article attracted so much attention that it was put in pamphlet form by the American National bank, of Atlanta, and widely distributed.

That pamphlet fell into the hands of the then secretary of agriculture, Henry A. Wallace, the father of the present secretary. He wrote me a congratulatory letter. In this connection, I want to say that the most encouraging words I have read in a long time were uttered recently by Secretary Wallace in his speech at Brunswick, Maine, when he said: "The people of the south never got their fair share of the national income, and they have been exploited by the protective tariff in a damnably unfair way." In these words Secretary Wallace has truthfully called attention to a situation that has existed and a policy that has been followed as long as I can remember. And they will not be forgotten by those in whose defense they were spoken.

Let me quote a paragraph from the pamphlet above mentioned, written September, 1914: "Pathetic, indeed, has been the life of the small landowner and the tenant farmer in Georgia and the south for 50 years. Courageous, honest, patient and long-suffering. When shall they see the light? When shall their burdens be lifted? In the springtime they go forth, and with 'our brothers in black,' set their hands to the plow. They bend their backs to the burden, and when the frost falls they have added $1,000,000,000 to the wealth of the world. But small, indeed, is their share, and meager the recompense to them. Every two years, according to the government census, they move from one place to another."

After 20 long years, conditions of which I then complained, appear to have grown worse. For the first time, I now have hope that I shall see the end of it.

I was, and still am, opposed to the voluntary cotton acreage reduction program. I was, and still am, opposed to the Bankhead law, limiting cotton production to 10,000,000 bales. I opposed these plans because I believed they would bring about the exact conditions among farm tenants that prevail today. And I think these steps are largely responsible for the 400,000 people on the relief rolls in Georgia at this time.

Praise is due Senator Russell for his amendment to the giant relief measure authorizing the use of part of that fund for the purchase of land for tenants. And it is greatly to the credit of Senator Bankhead, that he now sponsors a law that will enable tenants to become landowners, thus counteracting, I think, the damage resulting from the law limiting cotton production.

I have waited 20 years for reaction to, and corroboration of, the views I expressed in 1914 in regard to the farm tenancy. It is pleasant to know that I have not waited in vain. In 1920, when the farm crash came, I said in The Constitution, and I told bankers and businessmen in Atlanta, that if something were not done, and done speedily, to set the farmers on their feet, the breakdown of agriculture would wreck the entire business structure of the country. And it did.

It took nine years to do it. But it was done, and when it was done, it was a complete job.

Looking back over the past 70 years, there has been no amelioration of, and no letup in, the hard conditions that touch the lives, not only of farm tenants, but of the masses generally, except for one short period. And I have mentioned this period in former articles. It embraced the years 1917, 1918, 1919, and the early months of 1920. That was the period of the inflation caused by the World War. That was the period during which the dollar was worth barely more than 60 cents. That was the time when cotton brought from 25 to 40 cents, and everything was proportionately high. And that was the time, and the only time, since I and the tenant system were born, when tenants, white and black, and everybody else in this part of the world, were prosperous.

Nothing will bring us a revival of business and a return of prosperity but a cheap dollar—in other words—inflation.

J. T. HOLLEMAN,
Atlanta, May 6, 1935.

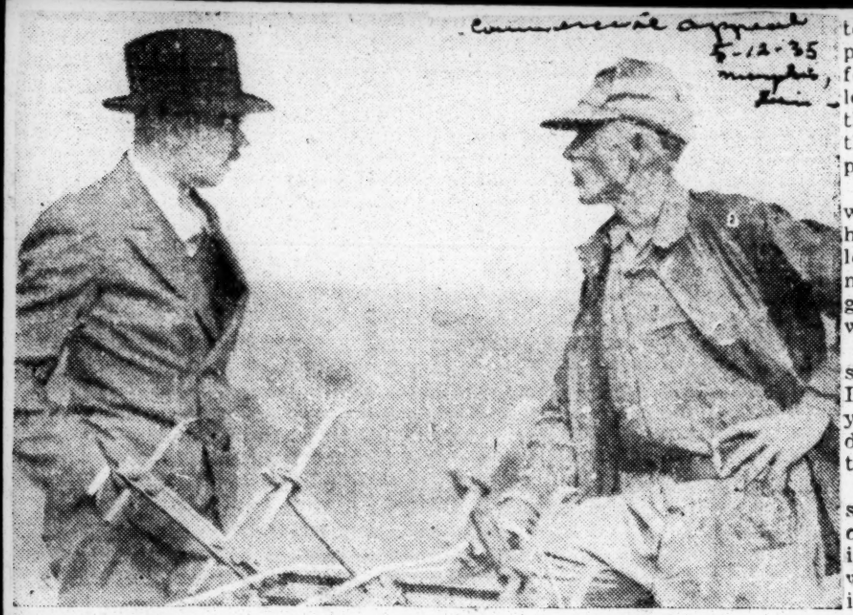
# Share-Croppers' Dilemma
# Not the Planters' Fault

Commercial Appeal Memphis Tenn 5-12-35

*This is the first of a series of articles by Edward Angly on the share-cropper and relief satuation in Tennessee, Mississippi and Arkansas now appearing in the magazine TODAY, which is edited by RAYMOND MOLEY.*

BY EDWARD ANGLY

SIMON MATHEWS and his wife, Marie, were rocking on the porch when I paused at the gate near the steps of their cabin. It was in the cool of the evening on the first Saturday of spring. The little pine house which is home to them stands a mile or so back from the levee of the Mississippi on a 4,000-acre plantation on the rich soil of Arkansas. Sixty-four years old and black as the ace of spades, Simon is a share-cropper, provident and content. Six hundred other negroes live in similar cabins on the same plantation. Most of the others have no gates, or fences around their gardens to keep out hogs and chickens. But that is not the landlord's fault, he offers free wood for palings, as well as for fuel. And it isn't that the cotton croppers haven't time to tidy up their homes, for most of the men work in the fields only about 120 days a year; and their wives, about 30 days, largely in the chopping and picking seasons. Their children — "half hands" — usually had quite a sum coming to him for his half, from which was subtracted the "furnish" he had obtained on credit during the spring and summer at the plantation store. The mules he used, the plow, harrow and other implements, were supplied gratis by the planter, as they were to all the other tenants.



Edward Augly — Share-Cropper

work even less. The reason they have no fences is that they are lazy.

It is easier, they calculate, to plant a garden away from the house, somewhere out in the cotton field, 'where the chickens ain't likely to find it." But Simon knows chickens are not always to be trusted not to stray. Like the white folks and the blacks, they get itching feet.

Old Simon has been share-cropping in Arkansas since 1921, the year the boll weevil drove him and Marie out of Louisiana, where they were born. When younger they used to work 20 acres of cotton a season, sometimes more.

Last year, partly because of his age and partly because of the AAA crop reduction program, Simon planted only six acres in cotton. The yield was better than a bale per acre. Being the long staple type of cotton, it brought a premium above the 12-cent price for ordinary cotton. After he had turned over the lint and seed to the landlord, Simon

**Plant to Prosper**

This spring, Simon isn't asking for as much at the commissary as are his more indolent neighbors. Half a century of share-cropping has taught him to keep his home larder adequately stocked. A cropper should raise one hog per year for each member of his family, and with only two mouths to feed, Simon raised three hogs last year, keeping on the safe side.

Simon fed them swill and fattened them on part of his share of the corn which he raised, also under the 50-50 arrangement. He and his wife have enough pork put away to last them until next winter's freeze brings another "killin' time."

Marie told me that the vegetables she had canned would keep them supplied until her garden "came up." She and her husband like this new crop restriction ordered by the government. "I did less work last year than the year before, but I made more money just the same," Simon said. "Seems like that's the way this new business operates. I averaged about two days work a week, taking it the year round. Since I started getting old I can't get out at sunup like I used to. In the mornings an old man is stiff. He has to sort of warm up first, to get himself loosened and limber, like you would a piece of leather.

"The boss, he lets me keep my mule near the house, so I don't have to walk all the way over to the big barn like the younger ones does to fetch the mule before breakfast."

It is only two hours by automobile from Simon's cabin to Marked Tree, Tyronza and the other places in Poinsett County which have made the headlines in recent weeks because of the activities of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union and the northerners who have come down to weep over the lot of the cropper and damn the planter and his system. Simon takes no stock in all that. The movement hasn't been able to penetrate into Horseshoe Lake County, where the plantation on which he lives is one of many.

I told him about Norman Thomas the Socialist, and others who had come from the north to advocate abolition of the southern tenant and cropper systems. "If they did that you know what it would be like?" Simon said. "It'd be like if there was a man out in a rowboat in the middle of the river and he lost both oars at the same time."

He talked of how, when cotton was four and five cents a pound during the Hoover era, the tenants still owed the landlords even after they'd picked and delivered their crops. And some of the planters just wiped the debt off, "seein' as how a man didn't have no chance to pay it back," and kept the cropper on. Last year, with 40 per cent fewer acres in cotton, Simon's landlord had taken in more families than he had the year before. And the same was true of several other planters he knew about.

Up north, I said, there were people who thought the croppers would be healthier and better off if they used less corn meal in their diet and more flour, which meant "you'd grow less corn and put in some wheat if you could."

"Corn's better than wheat for us," said Simon. "You see it's like this: If you're busy with something else, you can wait to pick corn and it don't hurt it none to stand out in the weather.

"Besides, it don't ripen at the same time as the cotton, which ought to be picked right away when it's ready. But wheat and cotton won't go together. It'd be like having an iron hot at both ends at the same time, and having to weld it in both places."

# Cotton Pickers' General Strike Called in Three More States By Tenant Farmers' Union

## Committee to Fix Date for Walkout—Strike On in Alabama

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Sept. 2.—The Southern Tenant Farmers Union today called a general strike of all day labor cotton pickers in Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma.

The union, which is Socialist-led has conducted many militant struggles in the past and has been the target of landlord and police violence. Last Spring several meetings of its Negro and white members in Arkansas were raided by landlords and police, and the speakers arrested and framed-up on anarchy charges. Several of the Negro leaders of the union have been murdered by landlords and their thugs.

A few months ago, the union signed a united front agreement at Washington, D. C., with the Share Croppers Union of Alabama which is at present leading a strike of cotton pickers in that State.

The strikers will ask 50 $1 per 100 pounds of cotton picked, H. L. Mitchell, executive secretary, said. The strike will become effective at a date to be fixed by the union strike committee, Mitchell explained.

"Answers to the questionnaires showed that the wages offered this year for cotton picking are from 50 to 60 cents per hundred," the tenant union leaders said.

He explained that sharecropper and tenant members will pick their own cotton, "but in the event they hire themselves and families out to pick on a day labor basis, they will ask the union wage of $1 per 100 pounds."

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General.

SHARECROPPER DELEGATION COMPELS FEDERAL INVESTIGATION
OF ANTI-NEGRO POLICY OF RELIEF & AAA BOARDS

WASHINGTON, D.C.-(CNA)- Federal investigation of violations by local administrators and boards in seven Alabama counties was promised by government official at a series of conferences with a delegation of sharecroppers, members of the Sharecroppers Union. Crusader News Agency
11-2-35 New York, N.Y.

Chester Davis, Administrator of the Agricultural Adjustment Act, promised to investigate the practice, prevalent in these counties, whereby landlords withhold cotton gin "tax free" certificates from the sharecroppers, forcing the tenants to pay six cents per pound processing tax. The landlords use these certificates to gin their own cotton, often escaping payment of any tax.

Another complaint presented by the delegation had to do with the payment of rent by the government for land taken out of production. In the past checks have been sent to the landlord with instructions to pay one-half of the amount to the tenant. In the seven Alabama counties under investigation, as well as in many other places, this payment has been systematically withheld from the tenant.

Strike-Breaking FERA Officials

Paul Porter, executive assistant to Mr. Davis, stated that he had met with more than 5,000 similar cases which he claims have been investigated. He intimated that separate checks might be sent to tenants and landlords in 1936.

Dallas Dort, director of the Division of Investigation of the FERA, promised the delegation that he would make investigations in Tallapoosa, Lowndes, Butler and Dallas counties, Alabama, where unemployed workers are in many cases kept from the relief rolls on the advise of the landlords on whose plantations they reside.

The delegation charged that during the recent cotton pickers' strike, relief officials in Montgomery County, which adjoins Lowndes County, organized cotton picking crews paying them relief money and sendimg them to plantations owned by individual landlords where they received an additional fifty cents per one hundred pounds of cotton picked. Mr. Dort said he would investigate this alleged misuse of government funds and strike-breaking by FERA officials.

Post Office Spies on Croppers

Postal authorities also agreed to investigate abuses by local officials of the U.S. mails. The delegation said that letters written to the relief officials in Washington by members of the Sharecroppers Union complainimg of conditions, were opened by the local postmasters, who are also landlords.

The information thus gained was turned over to vigilante groups composed of landlords and their agents. The first beatings and murders which occurred durin the recent cotton pickers' strike were of persons thus identified.

The delegation gave full information regarding the recent campaign of oppression in Alabama in which at least six union leaders were murdered and more than 20 were flogged, to the Department of Justice and to an assistant of the secretary of the President, but were told that the Federal Government "had no authority to interfere with state sovereignty" in these matters.

The delegation consisted of Annie Mae Meriwether, whose husband had been lynched in Lowndes County, Ala., on August 22, Henry Roberts, Wesley Smith, all cotton farmers, members of the Sharecroppers Union; Thomas Burke, assistant secretary of the Union; Donald Henderson, editor of the Rural Worker, and Mr. Gelders, Secretary of the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners.

General.

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Post Office Spies on Croppers

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The information thus gained was turned over to vigilante groups composed of landlords and their agents. The first beatings and murders which occurred during the recent cotton pickers' strike were of persons thus identified.

The delegation gave full information regarding the recent campaign of oppression in Alabama in which at least six union leaders were murdered and more than 20 were flogged, to the Department of Justice and to an assistant of the secretary of the President, but were told that the Federal Government "had no authority to interfere with state sovereignty" in these matters.

The delegation consisted of Annie Mae Meriwether, whose husband had been lynched in Lowndes County, Ala., on August 22, Henry Roberts, Wesley Smith, all cotton farmers, members of the Sharecroppers Union; Thomas Burke, assistant secretary of the Union; Donald Henderson, editor of the Rural Worker, and Mr. Gelders, Secretary of the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners.

# Farmer-Labor Party Needed to Defeat Bloody Terror in

By CARL REEVE

The workers and farmers of the South today are being oppressed by a bloody strikebreaking terror. In vital industrial sectors, the Democratic Party is attempting to strip all democratic rights from the workers. Every day the violence and terror exercised by the "New Deal" party of Roosevelt demonstrates the need in the South for a Farmer-Labor Party.

At least seven persons have been killed in the strike of Gulf Port longshoremen in Texas and Louisiana. In New Orleans the Roosevelt government has appeared directly in the situation on the side of the shipowners. An old federal injunction has been used in New Orleans to brazenly prevent all picketing. Arrested pickets were held for "federal investigation." Only the mass protest of the workers forced the authorities to allow limited picketing. United States marshals in New Orleans superintended hiring of scabs and loading of ships by these strikebreakers.

In the port of Lake Charles, La., a small army of deputized gunmen, armed with rifles, machine-guns and tear gas, shot into a picket line and wounded many strikers seriously. In the resulting battle, three men were killed. Police have shot down longshoremen in Galveston.

### Ports Are Armed Camps

The Gulf ports such as Houston, Galveston, New Orleans and Lake Charles are armed camps, where the city, state and federal authorities cooperate in terrorizing strikers and protecting scabs. The armed forces of the Democratic party officials are using every violent method to smash the International Longshoremen's Association in the South and to institute company unions in its place.

The striking coal miners in Alabama are faced with the same bloody terror. Twenty thousand coal miners there are striking under the banner of the United Mine Workers. Only a few days ago, in St. Clair County, Ala., deputized gunmen poured machine-gun bullets into a U.M.W.A. picket line, killing Virgil Thomas, a striker, and seriously wounding nine others. The St. Clair Grand Jury merely returned a single indictment against one gunman, on charges of second degree murder. The testimony showed that Charles Shepherd, superintendent of the Acmar mine of the Alabama Fuel and Iron Company, gave the order to fire. Attorney-General Carmichael was forced to remark, "**Law enforcement in St. Clair County is at a very low ebb!**"

A correspondent writes the Daily Worker, "**The county government is owned, stock and barrel, by the coal operators.**" Nine murder warrants were sworn out by the coroner but Sheriff Ab Crow refused to cooperate in serving them.

### Gun Terror in Kentucky

In the strike of the Kentucky coal miners, gunmen of the coal operators likewise machine-gunned picket lines, seriously wounding a score of striking miners.

**Thus the Democratic Party machine, operating as agents of the coal operators, the shipowners, textile bosses and other employers, is trying to abolish the right to strike, to picket, to meet and to organize in the South, and is trying to destroy the A. F. of L. unions and entrench the company unions.**

Latest figures released by the Labor Research Association show that the Democratic Party governors called out national guardsmen and state police against strikers in 13 states and the Republican governors called out troops or state police against strikers in two additional states up to Nov. 1, in 1935. These armed forces were called out twenty-two times against strikers. Governor Eugene Talmadge of Georgia has called out the national guard no less than seven times in the last two years against strikers, five times against textile strikers. Governor Ruby Lafoon of Kentucky called out the national guard in Harlan, Ky., on Sept. 29 and on Oct. 30 against striking miners. In September, Governor Olin Johnson called out the guard for the second time against the Pelzer textile strikers.

### Extra-Legal Terror

In Georgia, Louisiana, South Carolina, Texas, Florida, Alabama, Oklahoma and Kentucky, the governors have called out armed forces against strikers this year, up to November. In every one of these states the governors calling out the troops were Democratic Party officials.

But these examples give only a small part of the picture of the terror against labor in the South. Tenant farmers, cotton pickers, share croppers are being murdered. Lynchings terrorize Negroes in the Southern states. A whole horde of city and county officials of the Democratic Party, working directly for the employers, suppress all elementary rights of the workers.

Angelo Herndon, now in prison at Fulton Towers, Atlanta, Georgia, for organizing unemployed workers faces twenty years on the chain gang, which means certain death. Unemployed workers in the Southern states, condemned to starvation under the meagre W. P. A. wage scale of $19 per month, are being, in addition, removed from relief altogether by the thousands.

This violent, bloody terror against the Southern workers and farmers marks a desperate attempt of the employers to maintain the Southern masses in a state of starvation in order to continue to reap rich profits. The basis of this oppression is the maintenance of the large masses of Negroes in a state of abject starvation. Negroes are Jim-crowed, lynched, murdered and discriminated against in every way in order to maintain a lower wage scale in the South.

The murderous terror of the government against the longshoremen and miners is aimed at keeping down wages, maintaining wage differentials and installing company unions. In both strikes large numbers of Negro workers are involved.

The employers and their government know that by keeping the workers divided on the basis of color, by continued suppression of the Negroes, they can weaken the whole front of the unions.

**In spite of this terror the Southern workers have won some notable victories. The 9,000 Tennessee miners recently won a union contract with wage increases.**

### Need for Labor Party

The question of the building of the Labor Party in the South is a vital question, not only for the South, but for the labor movement of the entire country. Some of the governors who called out the national guard against strikers, were **indorsed by the A. F. of L. officials who were pursuing the policy of rewarding friends and punishing enemies within the two old parties.** (Bibb Graves in Alabama.)

It should now be clear that the Democratic Party in the South is a strikebreaking, union smashing agency of the employers. If this strikebreaking terror of the employers and the government succeeds, it would not only condemn the Southern workers to continued wage differentials, starvation and persecution, but it would weaken every trade union and the A. F. of L. as a whole on a national scale. The triumph of the company union in the Gulf ports would be a blow nationally against the International Longshoremen's Association, and the same is true of the other unions.

### Fight for Negro Rights

**The building of the Labor Party movement in the South, therefore, is a responsibility of the entire labor movement. The growth of the Farmer-Labor Party sentiment in the South, and the establishment of local labor parties, is one of the most effective means of mobilizing the masses against the strikebreaking terror.**

The present situation of terror in the South is another evidence of the need to strengthen the fight for the rights of the Negro workers. The Negro workers in the South are heroically fighting now in the mining fields, the longshore strike, in the sharecroppers' and agricultural workers' unions, as well as in many other industries.

From these facts follows the necessity of the development of a nationwide campaign of workers, farmers and liberals against the anti-union terror now raging in the South. Pressure must be brought on these officials of these Southern states and on the Roosevelt government, which co-operates in the strikebreaking, to put an end to the suppression of the democratic rights of the workers in the South. The workers and farmers of the South must be granted the right to organize, to meet, to speak, to strike, to fight against low wages, unemployment and company unions.

### A National Issue

The situation in the South points to the immediate need of the support from the entire country for the Farmer-Labor Party movement there. **The workers will get from the Democratic Party only the violent rule of big business, only murder of strikers, low wages, degradation and starvation.**

Linked up with the fight against the Southern terror, with the fight for a Labor Party in the South, is the intensification of the campaign for the rights of the Negroes in the South, and against all forms of discrimination—for the immediate release of Angelo Herndon, against all Jim-crow, against discrimination in wages and working conditions, against the Southern wage differential and for equal rights for Negroes.

The fight of the Southern workers for union conditions, in the face of the bloody terror now going on against them, deserves the support of the masses throughout the entire country.

Agriculture—1935
Labor Conditions.

General

PETERSBURG, VA.
PROGRESS INDEX

FEB 16 1935

## A Mechanical Cotton-Picker?

A DEVELOPMENT which we have always anticipated with more confidence than calm is the invention of a mechanical cotton picker. Why some enterprising man did not devise one long ago we do not know, but we do know that any man who could and did not do so was a benefactor to the large numbers of share-croppers and Negro hand-pickers of the South. The inventions which have been offered have always proved faulty in some respect, but it appears now that the mechanical cotton-picker has been perfected; that is, *The American Mercury* describes such an invention in its current number.

John W. Godfrey discusses the matter in the Raleigh *News & Observer* in much the same tone of uneasiness with which we have always contemplated it. Declaring that the introduction of such a machine may have consequences as important as that of the cotton gin, Mr. Godfrey lists four disturbing effects: the sweeping of armies of Negro hand-pickers off the cotton acreage of the South; the conversion of hundreds of thousands of tenants and share-croppers into wage-earners (one might add, if wages can be found); an alteration in the present world market resulting from the possibility of making a profit on five-cent cotton; and, last, the necessity of taking care of a new army of the unemployed and unadjusted.

The social problems to which this expected development will in time give rise are not to be contemplated with pleasure. As we see the situation now, here is one instance in which progress should be temporarily, at least, "bottled up," to use an expression frequently employed these last few years in discussing technological unemployment. Theoretically, of course, the artificial restraint of mechanical progress has great disadvantages, but how else can we cope with the situation?

The cotton situation is serious enough as it is. The continuation of our tariff policy, asserted the recent report of the Commission of Inquiry into National Policy in International Economic Relations, will necessarily bring about a reduction in the capacity of America to produce cotton for export, a fact which is only too self-evident. Add to this the factor of technological unemployment and we have a problem which should cause Southern economists sleepless nights.

Time
Chicago, Ill.

MAR 25 1935

### Share Croppers

Sirs:

Your article in TIME, March 4 [on share croppers], condenses in it a lot of willful exaggeration or inexcusable ignorance.

You quote a man named Fraser about "the peonage of 8,000,000 share croppers in the South." If this man had cared to inform himself he could have found that the farm census of 1930 showed for the entire cotton belt 2,500,000 cotton growers—landlords, renters and share croppers.† Then Norman Thomas, professional trouble maker, and others charge "wholesale evictions." So the share cropper is being held in peonage and evicted too.

Then Erskine Caldwell, he of the bizarre and the nasty, cooks up horrible stories; babies "sucking the dry teats of a mongrel bitch"—God, do you suppose he believes it himself?

Being a cotton planter of 30 years' experience I know the good and bad of our agriculture. Abuses? Some (as in every human relation). Not every planter is a fair and generous landlord, nor is every tenant a devoted and honest worker. So let me be general and say that, in my experience, the share cropper is a pretty happy individual. Like the planter, his fortunes rise and fall with cotton and its price. He has many opportunities for bettering his condition and increasing his income. I know substantial planters who started as share croppers. Those who try can do.

Grave injustice is being done. The planters rank high in the South's citizenship, but they are being held up to the world as a lot of selfish crooks, exploiting the weak and helpless. There has been enough of this. Stop looking for three-legged chickens and get at the truth.

MARK VALENTINE
Operating Manager

Union Securities Co.
Ferda, Ark.

*He was 2.—ED.

†The 8,000,000 included the croppers' families.—ED.

### Poverty Policy

Sirs:

. . . Could anyone, heretofore perturbed at the physical slavery of Southern Negroes, imagine that these Negroes' condition has been materially bettered by the trading of their physical slavery for a joint yoke with their former masters in economic slavery, imposed by policies of the Government which abolished the other variety?

Any crop necessarily selling in an "unprotected" market, partly foreign, partly hostile, partly limited by exchange difficulties, but of which, nevertheless, production supplies must be bought in a "protected" market, is a "poverty crop," and the producers thereof are economic slaves—be they share croppers, tenants, landowners, whites or Negroes.

If there be a duty to provide for tenants evicted as a consequence of restricted production of the "poverty crop," on whom does such duty devolve—the economically enslaved, debt-ridden landlord or the Government responsible for policies that inflict poverty on all producers of such crop?

W. C. NEILL
Vice President

Peoples Bank & Trust Co.
North Carrollton, Miss.

### Crackpot Version

Sirs:

"It's great to be a Georgian," despite even TIME's publicizing Erskine Caldwell's crackpot version of conditions in the Empire State of the South. Yanks! He gets paid to write that tomfoolery and the paragraph about the two children playing Romulus and Remus to a "dry-teated" hound is tops in the *Uncle Tom's Cabin* type of journalism.

. . . Author Caldwell has grossly erred and TIME, in playing up such far-fetched tripe, has reflected on the integrity of the people of a great State, and should hide its face.

. . . A few years back you harped on "lynchings"—now it's pellagra-ridden kiddies who can barely wobble to the little red school houses that are open only three months of the year. Call off the hounds, TIME! Georgia, like every other State, has her problems. To paint them in the "gory" hue of Caldwell is unfair without presenting at the same time the bright side.

FRANK ROSSITER
Reporter

*Savannah Morning News*
Savannah, Ga.

TIME will gladly print news, bright or dark, about Georgia or any other place.—ED.

### Caldwell's Hog Wallow

Sirs:

. . . Erskine Caldwell is seizing upon an isolated instance or two of injustice to tenant farmers by Jefferson County landowners to paint the county as a sink of iniquity. As a lamyankee of many generations standing, I cannot be accused of rushing to the defense of my native State. But by profession trained to accurate observation and impartial reporting, and speaking from six years' intimate familiarity with Jefferson County, I can say that a more contemptible libel has never been uttered about any community.

What Caldwell would term the bourgeoisie of that county are cultured, kindly and humane people. Their attitude toward, and relationship with, the tenant classes, white and colored, is friendly and sympathetic in the highest degree. To be sure there are cases of social injustice in Jefferson County, as there are in every county in every State in the Union. But I have yet to see the community with as low a percentage of social injustice as that one which Caldwell would hold up to the world as a horrible example.

Erskine Caldwell is one of those neurasthenic egomaniacs in the infliction of which upon mankind the Creator seems to have been guilty of unnecessary harshness to an erring world. . . .

One superb talent Caldwell has. Give him a single stink and he can create a magnificent hog wallow, a singularly appropriate gift for those of his ilk.

WARREN H. PIERCE

*The Daily Clintonian*
Clinton, Ind.

### "Smart Aleck"

Sirs:

. . . You better leave town after quoting from that smart aleck, Erskine Caldwell, because the Chamber of Commerces south of the Potomac will want to tar and feather you, and ride you on a rail for your dastardly interence that folks are starving in the South. I'll have you to know that we might have illiteracy, hookworm, inertia, lynchings, murder, pellagra and malnutrition, but never "starvation." They can starve in Russia if they want to (or if Hearst wants them to), but they better not starve in the South, because the Chamber of Commerce don't like it, and smart alecks like me and Erskine Caldwell write stories about it.

JAMES HARRISON

Alexandria, Va.

### Father

Sirs:

ERSKINE CALDWELL'S STORY ESSENTIALLY TRUE. NO INVESTIGATION MADE, EFFORTS BEING TO COVER UP FACTS. NEWSPAPER PROPAGANDA IS BEING SENT IN EFFORT TO HIDE FACTS IN CASE. PEOPLE NOT ON GROUND DENOUNCE THE STORY AS FALSE.

I. S. CALDWELL
(Father of Erskine Caldwell)
Pastor

Presbyterian Church
Wrens, Ga.

Since sending the foregoing telegram, Father Caldwell was given the opportunity to assist in an investigation (see below).—ED.

### Caldwell Called

Sirs:

I read with a great deal of interest and astonishment your edition of March 4 in which you quote from a recent article by Erskine Caldwell which appeared in the New York *Post*. I am not making direct answer to Caldwell in a communication addressed to you, but I wish to ask that you read the attached editorial from the Augusta *Chronicle* and the indignant denial of the charges made by Caldwell by prominent people from the section to which he refers. . . .

. . . Until now no one has taken the trouble to call Caldwell's hand but I think it is now high time to do so. . . .

THOMAS J. HAMILTON
Editor

*The Augusta Chronicle*
Augusta, Ga.

The forthright Augusta *Chronicle* sent newshawks, accompanied by Erskine Caldwell's father, to investigate Writer Caldwell's charges. The *Chronicle's* editorial challenge: "Once proven not to be true let's tell the world about it, so that millions of people in this country may not believe that we are heartless heathens. If by any chance Caldwell is right, let's know the truth, admit it with shame and humiliation and go about correcting it." For what the Augusta *Chronicle* admits, and what it has to tell the world, see p. 59—ED.

### Browbeaten, Bulldozed

Sirs:

I just read your article under "Farmers" in TIME, March 4 and must say that you are on the right track at least. God help you to print more of the truth in forthcoming issues if it can help us poor whites (and blacks) who are share croppers in the Old South. I was "born and raised" on a farm in middle Georgia and know only too well what thieving, gouging, "chiseling," browbeating, bulldozing landlords

do to us. This has been going on for generations and is not just born of the Depression. I am only 35 years old but am in reality an old man, what one reared in the "American high standard of living" would be at 65, all due to overwork in the cotton fields, together with under-nourishment in my childhood. I cannot remember but two or three times in all my life when my hunger was fully appeased. These times were when I would steal a pig or chicken from the "old Mr." who owned the land, but I liked to got caught once and had to quit that. I have seen poor hungry Negroes get three to five years for killing one of their landlord's hogs. The only meat we ever get is salt fat pork, the kind you boil vegetables with, and only a mere pittance of that. In a way I was more lucky than some, in that I always had a hankering for book learning and have learned to read and write fairly well, but in a way this is a curse for I can read how people in the Northern cities actually get $10 to $12 a week relief, and do not have to work for it either. Why can't we get some sort of a break? I am not married (thank God), for I would not be a party to bringing more unfortunates like me into this world. . . .

ABRAHAM COOK

Millen, Ga.

# FOR END OF FARM TENANCY

Times 4-14-35

## Bankhead Says His Senate Measure Would Help to Solve the Farm Home Problem

New York

By JOHN H. BANKHEAD,
Senator From Alabama.

At the rate we are going now it won't be long until every second farmer in the United States will be a tenant. Nearly 45 per cent of our farmers were tenants in 1930, and the number is growing all the time.

Naturally, the tenant situation is worse in some parts of the United States than it is in others. Tenancy is heaviest in the South and Midwest, and lightest in the New England States and along the Pacific Coast. While some tenancy is found in every State in the Union the percentage of tenant-operated farms ranges from a high of 72 per cent in Mississippi and 68 per cent in Georgia to a low of 5 per cent in New Hampshire and 4½ per cent in Maine.

Tenancy is not the result of the AAA and it is not a Negro problem, as some would have you believe. Negro tenancy is actually declining, while white tenancy is increasing. The tenant problem in this country is a national problem that includes all races, all creeds, and reaches from Maine to California, and from the Lakes to the Gulf. It has been growing in seriousness for more than fifty years.

### Farmers' Home Bill.

The Farmers' Home Bill that I introduced in the Senate on March 26, will, I believe, if properly administered, go a long way toward solving our American tenant problem. The purpose of this bill is to help worthy tenants buy and own their own farms.

The bill will help thousands and thousands of worthy tenants to establish themselves on pieces of land they can call "home." It will slow down the annual movement of our tenants. It will transfer many from the gypsy type to stable home owners. I am informed that the average for all tenants is now only four years at a place.

The bill will not increase the amount of cash crops that the AAA has been fighting to control. It states that special effort will be made to avoid expansion of production for the market of crops for which the price is lower than parity.

It will not bring more land into cultivation either. It provides that the purchase of farm homes will be confined, as far as reasonably possible, to helping tenant farmers and share-croppers to acquire farm homes on land now in cultivation.

Under the terms of the new bill, "preference shall be given applicants who are married or who have dependent families, have good moral character, and are experienced in farming and familiar with farm operations, or who are or recently were farmers, farm tenants, share-croppers, or farm laborers."

### Terms of Payment.

The rate of interest under the terms of this new farm tenant program will be as low as possible. An applicant can move on the farm and defer the first annual instalments if that is necessary, and can have sixty years to pay out his farm if he needs that much time. He can meet his small annual payments with the rent money he is now paying.

A New York farmer who contracted for a farm when he was 30 years old would, under this program, have the assurance of a shelter over his head for sixty years, or until he was 90 years old, if he needed that much time, and if he kept up his small annual payments.

There are in all parts of the country banks, absentee landlords, other individuals and insurance companies that have acquired farms through foreclosures. Many of these would be glad to get rid of their farms if they could find a safe buyer. They can do that under the tenant bill.

The bill that I am sponsoring is S. 2367. It is a bill to create a farmers' home corporation which will be administered by a board composed of five members. Three of these members are to be appointed by the President, while the Secretary of Agriculture and the Governor of the Farm Credit Administration will be ex-officio members.

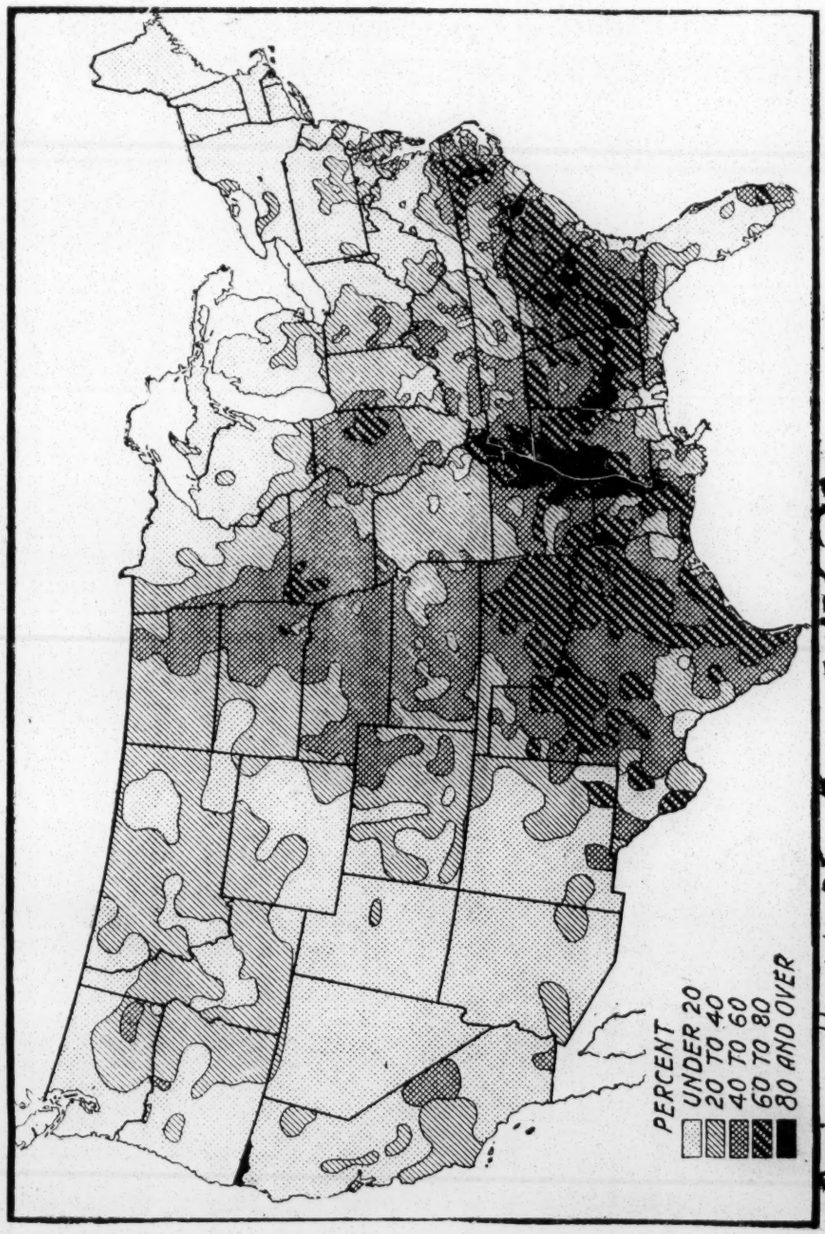
### Powers of Corporation.

Under this program the corporation can buy land together with other necessary buildings and structures. It can buy livestock, farm equipment, implements, machinery furnishings, supplies and other facilities necessary to start a tenant on the road to successful home ownership and resell these to worthy tenants on easy terms.

The program will be financed by such transfers as the President may make from the $4,800,000,000 Relief Act and by a billion-dollar bond issue, but it will not result in additional taxes. It is to be self-liquidating. If one applicant falls down on his payment another applicant will take over the property. The land is the security, and the government will be behind and guaranteeing the whole program.

Representative Marvin Jones of Texas, who is chairman of the Agricultural Committee in the House, has introduced a companion bill to my Senate bill. We are now all agreed on one bill, and I have the best reason for believing that if it is passed the President will approve it, and both Mr. Jones and myself are being urged to get it into law before this Congress adjourns.

FARM TENANCY—ITS EXTENT IN AMERICA




Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

The shadings indicate the proportion of farms occupied by tenants and croppers.

Times 4-14-35 New York

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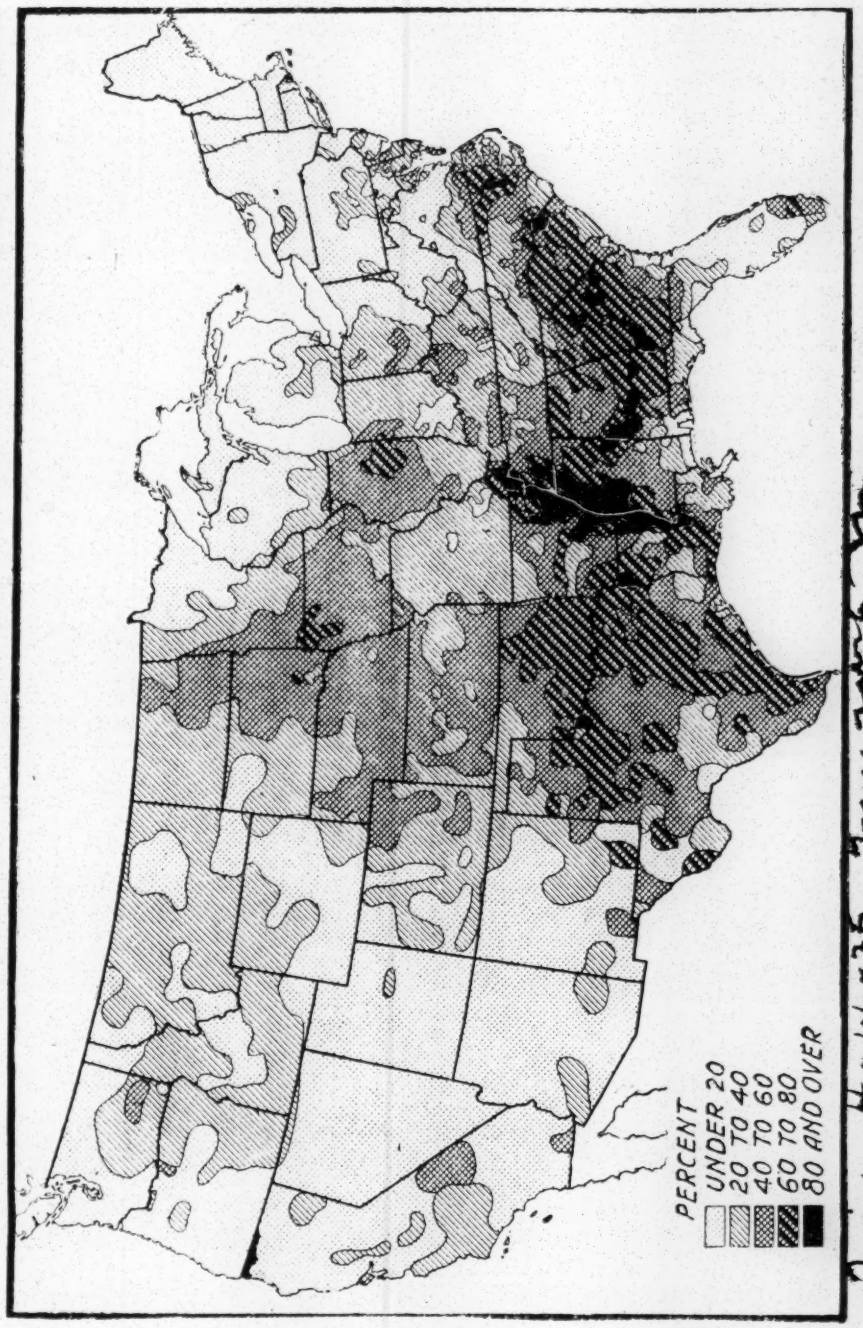



Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

The shadings indicate the proportion of farms occupied by tenants and croppers.

Times 4-14-35 New York

Agriculture - 1935
Labor Conditions.

General.

# AAA PILES MISERY ON SHARE CROPPERS

2 items

## Cotton Program Cuts Their Meager Incomes as Federal Cash Benefits Landlords.

4-15-35

## SUFFER IN FOOD PRICE RISE

New York Times

## 'Red Scare' in Arkansas and Masked Riders Block Their Efforts to Unionize.

*This is the first of a series of articles revealing the economic status of share croppers in the South under the crop curtailment program of the AAA, written by a* TIMES *correspondent in the field.*

By F. RAYMOND DANIELL.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., April 14.—The rich bottom lands of Northeastern Arkansas, where cotton is king, abound in the reminders that the alphabet contains no magic formula to cure economic maladjustments that have existed for generations.

Crop reduction, parity payments and government rental money for acres retired from production have increased the prosperity of the landlords who control not only the sources of wealth in this area but dominate its social and political life as well.

There is another class, however, which has not shared equally in the benefits of the New Deal. These are the share croppers, who, it has been estimated, constitute between 80 and 90 per cent of those directly affected by the "Three A's," as the Agricultural Adjustment Act is known.

For many of them, the "Three A's" have spelled unemployment, shrunken incomes and a lowered standard of living, if the hand-to-mouth existence they have led since the war between the States may be called living at all. For them NRA has meant only an excuse for higher prices of foodstuffs and manufactured goods at the commissary store and FERA has proved an uncertain refuge.

### Many Evicted From Homes.

Attempts to better their lot through organization in the Southern Tenant Farmers Union have taught them that they have few rights under the laws of Arkansas and no more security under the New Deal than they have had in the past. Scores have been evicted or "run off the place." For union activity, and masked night riders have spread fear among union members, both white and black. In some communities the most fundamental rights of free speech and assemblage have been abridged.

Old statutes against anarchy have been invoked to put "outside agitators" in jail. An old law against barratry, designed to prevent lawyers from drumming up business by stirring up feuds among neighbors, has been stretched to cover the activities of union organizers. In Marked Tree, which squats with sullen ugliness in the heart of the troubled area, it is now against the law to make a speech or hold a street meeting without permission of the Mayor.

Socialist sponsorship of the union and the tactless trampling on ingrained Southern prejudices by Northern organizers have created a "red scare" which would be comic if it were not for the potentially tragic consequences. That no one has been killed is due solely to the policy of passive non-resistance which the union has adopted.

### Strangers Under Suspicion.

The average planter and public official is firmly convinced that unless he takes drastic steps, white supremacy, Christianity, the American flag and the sanctity of home and family ties will be overthrown by agents of the Soviet Union. Every stranger who visits Marked Tree, Tyronza, Harrisburg, Jonesboro or any other community in the section is looked upon with suspicion, and to express sympathy for the share-cropper is to invite trouble.

Elizabeth Dilling's "Red Network," which lists Mayor F. H. La Guardia and Jane Addams of Hull House as dangerous radicals, has become the standard reference work of the locality. There are few planters or officeholders who will accept a visitor on friendly terms without first looking him up in this handy "Who's Who" of radicalism.

Five counties, all located in the upper part of the Arkansas Delta, where it is not uncommon for unfertilized land to yield a 500-pound bale of cotton to the acre, have been the centres of unrest among the share croppers.

These are the counties of Craighead, Poinsett, Cross, Crittenden and Mississippi, all within easy driving distance of Memphis but all bearing the marks of newly settled land.

Several factors have combined into this section to cause trouble. Chief among them are the high percentage of white share croppers in this area, a surplus of labor created by the lure of the fertile bottom lands for the farmer on the submarginal lands to the west, and the fact that the tradition of the soil is less deeply rooted in the share cropper of this region than it is in other cotton-growing States to the south.

Twenty-five or thirty years ago most of this land, which now produces a higher yield of cotton than any other section of the country, was covered with virgin forest. Lumber companies bought it up for a few dollars an acre, cleared it of its timber, drained it and converted it to cotton. Many of the lumbermen of yesterday remain as the share croppers of today.

Upon this region and upon these people has been grafted the plantation system, which grew up in the South after the war between the States, when both masters and former slaves were left without resources except the credit and land of the former and the labor of the latter.

Here "Ole Master" has assumed a corporate aspect, and great tracts of land ranging from a few hundred to 25,000 acres are owned by large lumber and insurance companies.

### End Each Year as They Began It.

The plantation office usually is located in a sawmill or the back of a commissary store.

The crops on these plantations are produced by the share croppers, peasants who end each year as they began it, either in debt or with their cash resources exhausted. Having no cash of their own, they agree to farm the land for half the crop. The landlord furnishes the land, a place to live rent free, a team of mules and farming tools and enough credit to keep his tenant alive in the period between planting and picking time.

The highways of Arkansas are lined with rickety, dilapidated 'shotgun houses" placed 200 yards or so apart. They consist of from two to four rooms and they cost from $300 to $500 to build. These are the homes the landlord provides for his tenants.

Many of them have roofs that do not keep out the rain and walls that offer scant protection against the cold winds of Winter. Some lean crazily to one side, looking as though a good push would knock them over, and others stand on stilts only a few inches above the water in the Spring when the Mississippi, the St. Francis and the Little Rivers overflow their banks. They serve as reminders that slums can exist in the open spaces as well as in the congested sections of great cities.

### Small Credit Allowance.

Rarely does the credit advanced to the tenant by the landlord exceed $1 an acre per month, and upon that method most of them must live until they receive the first cash from their share of the crop next Fall. Under the crop-reduction program those who have been lucky enough to "get a crop" for next year will have credit at the store ranging from $10 to $25 a month.

Upon this credit allowance the sharecropper must pay his landlord interest which in many cases greatly exceeds 10 per cent. He must buy his food and clothing at the only place where his credit is good with coupons torn from his "doodlum book," sometimes at a mark-up of from 10 to 25 per cent.

The sharecroppers' credit is so meagre that it permits him only the bare necessities of life. He lives generally on a diet of cornbread, salt meat and beans. Evidences of undernourishment and pellagra are apparent throughout the Cotton Belt, and Northeastern Arkansas is no exception.

In the Fall, when the last bale of cotton has been ginned, the sharecropper—provided he has been industrious and fortunate enough besides to work for an honest landlord—may receive from $200 to $500 for his share of the crop. This represents his income for himself and his wife and children, who generally help him "chop" and pick the cotton. Upon that he must live until the next Spring, in March or April, when work and credit are resumed.

Politically the sharecropper has been effectually disfranchised by the poll tax. In Arkansas it is only $1 a year, but it is payable in the Spring, when the sharecropper's fortunes are at their lowest ebb. When an important campaign is in the offing it is the custom for the landlords to pay the poll taxes of their tenants, who are then instructed how to vote.

### Has No Place in Social Life.

Socially he has no place, whether he is a Negro or a white man. Automobiles have made it possible for the planters to live more comfortably in the towns and the rural church, formerly the centre of community life, has disappeared.

The share cropper in his patched and ragged raiment knows he is not welcome among the better-dressed congregations in the towns, and stays away. Even in the education of his children he fares badly, for the rural schools, taught by inferior teachers, are open a shorter time than the urban schools and many tenant farmers are too poor to meet the cost of books and shoes.

The Agricultural Adjustment Act did little to protect the share cropper from the greed and avarice of the landlord. He has no representation on the community or county committees which perform a function similar to the compliance boards of NRA and is as much at the mercy of the plantation owner as ever.

He gets no share of government rental money paid to the landlord for the 40 per cent of the land taken out of production, and many tenants complain that even the parity payments to which they are entitled have been withheld by their landlords. The contracts which the planters entered into with the government have offered no measure of protection to the tenant against eviction.

The condition of the share cropper in Arkansas is no worse than that of his brothers in the other cotton-producing States.

In some ways it is better in Arkansas, for at least he can raise his crop on its fertile land with a minimum of labor. Still he is not satisfied and he is beginning to register his protest.

## A. F. L. FOR BANKHEAD BILL.

### Breaks Precedent by Endorsing Act to Aid Share-Croppers.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, April 14.—The American Federation of Labor departed from its long-established policy of limiting its activities strictly to problems directly affecting labor and endorsed today the Bankhead bill, designed to rehabilitate approximately 10,000,000 sharecroppers and tenant farmers, Negro and white.

This endorsement was made known by William Green, president of the federation, in the following words:

"I have given special consideration to the Bankhead bill. We are in hearty accord with this proposed legislation and gladly extend all assistance and help possible in any effort which may be put forth to secure its enactment into law."

The statement was made on the eve of action by the Senate Agriculture Committee, which is to report out the measure tomorrow.

Organized labor, which now has joined the social welfare departments of the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish denominations in endorsing the Bankhead bill, has done so for the same reasons as the other supporting groups.

The bill provides for a billion-dollar bond issue to convert sharecroppers and tenant farmers to the independent status of small farmers, protecting them against land speculation.

Providing for a change in the crop control contract through a comprehensive land settlement program, the bill aims to convert the present land holdings of insurance companies and Federal Farm Land Banks for the use of the sharecroppers and tenants.

Those supporting the bill feel that for the first time it would give the 2,500,000 families, Negro and white, a real opportunity to obtain a homestead.

Properly carried out, the proposed program, it is said, would

greatly help the race situation in the South, which at the moment is being aggravated by the increasing competition between Negroes and whites. At the same time the program is urged because it is believed that it would provide in the long run a market for the cheap electricity being developed for the rural South by the TVA.

Those who favor the program say that it also would aid the Department of Agriculture in its long-run cotton control program. It also would make possible the development of an adequate rural education.

Behind the movement for the bill was a thorough examination of the problem by economists, farm experts and others. The bill has the approval of the Department of Agriculture.

# TENANT BILL GIVEN FLAYING IN SENATE

## Land Purchase Ail Called Move to Communism

VOTE MAY COME MONDAY

4-20-35

### Debates Will Be Limited in the Upper House on Bankhead Proposal—Byrd Plans to Ask Recommitment

WASHINGTON, April 19.—Branded Communistic, the Bankhead bill for the government to lend up to 1,050 million dollars to purchase farms and equipment for the needy met a storm of criticism in the Senate today.

Party lines were shattered as Senator Byrd, Democrat, Virginia, served notice he would move to recommit the bill.

The Roosevelt administration is heading the United States toward Communism, Senator Dickinton, Republican, Iowa, declared in a slashing attack on the measure.

Debate on the bill will be limited beginning Monday, noon, with final action expected that day.

**Likened to Russia**

The Bankhead Bill would create a farmers' home corporation with 50 million dollars capital and authority to borrow 1,000 million dollars for 60-year loans to tenant farmers, share croppers and others desiring to own a farm.

Dickinson said:

Dickinson said:

"This bill provides for exactly the same thing they are doing in Soviet Russia.

"It is a bill to enable tax-poor land owners to unload their property on the government. It is a bill to aid land speculators.

"We are heading toward Communism."

Declaring the Bankhead bill unconstitutional, Senator Dickinson demanded that the government "stay out of teh real estate business."

## Sharecroppers in Dixie Seen as Fertile Field for the Red Agitators

## PRINCIPLE IS INDORSED BY RELIEF OFFICIAL

## Westbrook Says Europe Leads in Aiding Class

4-17-35

Special To The Commercial Appeal

WASHINGTON,, April 16.—Secretary of Agriculture Wallace today urged the House Agriculture Committee to approve a billion-dollar plan to put tenant farmers and sharecroppers on their own nfarms.

"Teh south is fertile soil for Communism, among the sharecroppers," he said. "The cure is not violence or restriction of speech, but to give these people a stake."

The Bankhead-Jones bill, under consideration, provides a $50,000,000 government corporation, with authority to issue government-guaranteed bonds up to $1,000,000,000.

**Principle Indorsed**

The principal of helping farm tenants to own their homes also was indorsed by Lawrence Westbrook, assistant director of the Federal Relief Administration.

"I think it is the very best thing that can be done for them," he told questioners.

He disagreed with one interrogator that the Bankhead cotton program brought about the south's distressed tenant situation and expressed confidence they would be able to pay for their homes under the proposed plan.

He said he had hoped the farm credit setup would do something for America's tenant farmers along lines of aid given these classes in European countries, but that it had not.

"If farmers themselves haven't been able to keep their land and tenancy has incraesed to 42 per cent of the farm population or within sight of half of them, how may we expect to avoid even more tenancy unless we give these people help?" Poe asked.

He etstified the short rental leases saf constant shifting of tenants with resultant inadequate conservation of the land. Secretary Wallace made the same point.

# DIXIE JOINS WITH EAST

## President of Manufacturers' Association Demands Wallace Step Out

## TEXTILE PROCESSING TAX BRANDED 'UNREASONABLE'

4-26-35

### McIntyre Hears Farm Plea for AAA Continuance

By United Press

AUGUSTA, Ga., April 25.—Southern cotton manufacturers today heard bitter criticism of the AAA's cotton program and demand for tariff protection against low-cost Japanese imports.

The keynote address of W. D. Anderson, president of the American Cotton Manufacturers Association, at its thirty-ninth annual convention here indicated the southern group will join New England manufacturers in a determined fight for elimination of the cotton processing tax.

Marvin McIntyre, White House secretary, arrived at the convention, reportedly as an unofficial observer for President Roosevelt, a few moments after Anderson had suggested that Secretary Wallace resign "and start a farm paper somewhere where he could do no serious harm to the country."

**Just Attending**

Asked in what capacity he was attending the convention, McIntyre said: "I'll attend; that's all."

Before going to the convention hall, McIntyre was told by a group of cotton farmers from Georgia and South Carolina that they wanted the entire AAA program continued "as is."

Anderson termed the processing tax "an unreasonable levy on the necessities of life."

"Our industry is not objecting to payments to the farmer in such amounts as are needed to make his situation equal with that of the other citizens of this country," Anderson said. "Our contention is that in raising the money for these benefits by levying them on the processing of cotton, wheat, corn and hogs, a gigantic sales tax of from 15 to 25 per cent is being levied on the meat bread and clothes of the people."

Speakers at the opening session of the association's three-day convention painted a generally gloomy picture for the cotton textile industry. "I see little use for us to kid ourselves," Anderson warned. "We are facing a dangerous situation."

**Mills Closed Down**

George A. Sloan, chairman of the cotton textile code authority, pointed out that during the past eight months 71 cotton mills, normally employing 20,800 workers, "have been obliged to close down and cease operations."

Sloan said that Japanese imports were threatening the domestic cotton market and were even a more serious danger to the export trade. He said that low wages, approximately 23½ cents a day, paid to Japanese textile workers is "the sole cause of this influx of imports."

"It is this government's concern and responsibility to protect NRA hours and wages from low-wage foreign competition," he asserted.

Sloan joined Anderson in attacking the processing tax as "a huge sales tax falling the heaviest on those least able to pay." Both criticized failure of the government to impose compensating taxes on competing fibers.

"Fair and immediate protection from low-wage, foreign competition and complete removal of the cotton processing tax would go a long way toward reviving this industry," Sloan declared.

Senator Tydings, Democrat, Maryland, told the more than 600 cotton manufacturers attending the convention that "the United States cannot compete in the cotton markets of the world unless its people can produce both raw and manufactured cotton at a price which will permit us to sell the product in competition with foreign countries which produce it."

**Forced Price Up**

Attacking the AAA program which has forced up the price of American cotton, the senator warned that "in the end high-priced raw cotton and high-priced cotton textiles will drive both southern farmers and American manufacturers more and more from the world markets with consequent unemployment and a loss of national income.

"What has been done to assist the cotton production industry in the recent two years may have been justified as a necessary temporary expedient. It can never be justified as a permanent policy of the United States for the present policy, but writes its own doom the longer it continues."

Senator Tydings dealt mainly with the whole foreign trade problem, urging a "practical" settlement of the war debts "to liquidate our creditor position" and make it possible for foreign nations to buy more goods from us.

**Georgia Manufacturer**

Anderson, a cotton manufacturer of Macon, Ga., was critical of Secretary Wallace, whose attitude and program, he said, "are seriously injuring the textile industry and accelerating its destruction at a time when we are laboring under serious difficulties."

"I cannot escape the conclusion," he said, in urging that Wallace resign his post, "that the sober thinking elements of this country have reached the decision that Wallace has demonstrated his incapacity to preside over the Department of Agriculture."

Warning that "the tide of imports from Japan is just rising," Anderson said the "disturbing factor is the low prices at which they are offering their goods—prices far below anything domestic manufacturers can make. The Japanese spinner does not have to pay Mr. Wallace's processing tax; neither must he limit his hours of work as we do in this country."

Anderson went into detailed comparisons to refute charges that textile workers' wages were too low and vigorously upheld the principle of a wage differential between southern and northern mills where by the minimum pay is $1 per week less in the south.

A style show in latest cotton fashions entertained the convention delegates at an informal dinner tonight. A merchandising symposium is on the program for tomorrow, with the executive business session scheduled for Saturday morning.

# Dixie Policy Group Backs Tenant Bill

WASHINGTON, May 15.—(AP)—A letter calling for support of the Bankhead bill to aid farm purchases by tenants was sent today to each member of the senate by the Southern Policy Committee.

"As members of the Southern Policy conference representing nine southern states," the letter said, "we regard Senator Bankhead's farm tenant bill as the most constructive piece of land legislation yet introduced.

"At our recent meeting in Atlanta on April 25-28, we unanimously voted to support prompt and favorable action on the Bankhead bill as the most promising means of removing the devasting tenant system.

"We urge you to give this bill your immediate support."

The policy committee recently was organized by a group of prominent southerners. H. C. Nixon, of Tulane University, is chairman and Brook Hays, democratic national committeeman of Arkansas, vice chairman.

Agriculture—1935
Labor Conditions.

General.

# AS AN AUTHORITY HERE SEES COTTON PROBLEM

Commercial Appeal

*In an earlier article printed in The Commercial Appeal, Dr. Tait Butler, one of the south's recognized agricultural authorities and editor of the Progressive Farmer and Southern Ruralist, reviewed "Cotton Acreage and Production" and "The Cotton Adjustment Program of 1933." He said, in that article: "There are several reasons why our cotton exports are lower. Foreign nations produced more cotton and during the three preceding years foreign countries bought more American cotton than they used because the price was low. Now they are using more American cotton than they are buying."*

2-20-35

BY DR. TAIT BUTLER

Memphis, Tenn.

**How does the cost of producing cotton in the United States compare with that in foreign countries?**

It is difficult to make trustworthy or accurate comparisons of the cost of producing any farm crop in widely separated countries, where conditions vary greatly. While a low price one year usually reduces the production slightly the following year, continued low prices tend to lower standards of living, instead of driving farmers rapidly to other crops or entirely out of the production of any general field crop. It is also true that in most other large cotton growing countries there are other factors, equally as important as the price of cotton, which determine the volume of production.

For example, even if India could produce cotton for much less than it can be produced for in the United States, the ever present need for more food would always exert a powerful influence over the volume of cotton production. In other words, food production will always have a stronger call on India than cotton production, for it already taxes to the limit her available lands to produce enough food for her 320,000,000 people. Food prices are not likely to go so low and cotton prices so high as to enable India to do as is done in the United States and nowhere else, produce cotton with which to buy farm food and feed supplies. This becomes evident when it is realized that much the larger part of India cotton is very short staple and her production only about 80 pounds per acre.

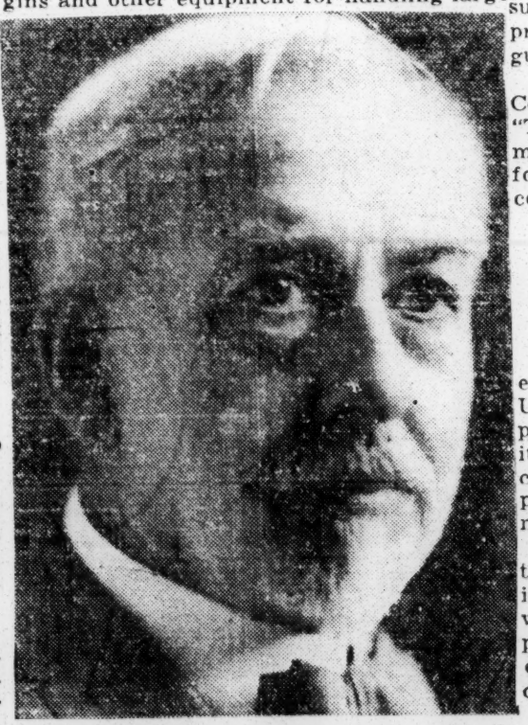
**China, Egypt, Russia, Brazil**

China, the next of third largest cotton producing country, labors under similar limitations as India in respect to urgent needs for ever-increasing food supplies, but China produces much larger yields per acre than India. Therefore, unless food demands become greater and prices relatively high, and cotton relatively low in price, China will continue, under pressure from Japan, to slowly increase her cotton production.

Egypt and Russia are next to China in volume of cotton production. The influences limiting any large increase in Egyptian cotton production are the need for food production and the absence of an additional acreage suitable for the growing of cotton.

Russia's limitations are climatic and the time and expense necessary to put large areas under irrigation or in suitable condition for growing cotton. Moreover, if Russia should ever use half as much cotton per capita as is used in the United States it would take nearly twice as much as she has ever grown to supply her own needs.

Brazil, the fifth largest foreign cotton growing country has much more promising opportunities for expanding her production than have the other large cotton producing countries, except the United States. Her difficulties are those of developing a new country and a new crop. The development of large production of any farm crop is a slow process. In the case of Brazil large cotton production means competition with another well established crop—coffee—of clearing and subduing new lands and putting them in suitable condition for cotton growing. Brazil also has the problems of transportation, providing and educating laborers in the best ways of growing cotton and providing gins and other equipment for handling large



Dr. Tait Butler.

crops. But Brazil will undoubtedly continue to increase her cotton production at varying rates of speed, as in the past. In 1924 Brazil produced 793,000 bales of cotton, her largest crop up to that time, but it took her until 1933 or nine years later to reach 969,000 bales. In 1934 she made another relatively large increase, but it is almost certain that this rate of increase will not be continued.

As indicated, the cost of production will be less of a factor in influencing future production of cotton than the prices of other farm products and the standard of living required. But there is no reason, except inexperience and the lack of equipment, which should prevent Russia, Brazil and other South American and South African countries producing cotton as cheaply as the United States, but it must be remembered that there are tremendous handicaps in developing large production of any new farm crop, anywhere and at any time.

From what data I have been able to study and from the opinions of others who have made disinterested investigations of this question, I have come to the conclusion that the farmers of the United States with their climate, soils, equipment and experience can and will produce cotton of like quality or value as efficiently and economically as any other large producing country and maintain a higher standard of living. They cannot do this unless prices are stabilized so that they will not be plunged into debt or made bankrupt every five to seven years, as a result of over-production and greatly depressed prices, as has been the case at irregular intervals for the last 40 years.

A. H. Garside, economist of the New York Cotton Exchange, is quoted as saying: "There is no question that the South can more than hold its own in competition with foreign cotton growing territories, so far as concerns costs and prices."

IV.

**How do economic conditions in the South, since the crop production adjustment policy was adopted, compare with those of uncontrolled production?**

Since foreign nations have never produced enough cotton for their own use and the United States has had to supply about 40 per cent of what foreign nations consumed it is evident that the size of the United States crop has very largely determined world prices in so far as supply and demand determine prices.

In 1904, 1914, 1920, 1926 and 1931 relatively large crops of cotton were produced in this country. The result in each case was that the selling price of cotton was depressed so low as to bring heavy burdens of debt, if not bankruptcy on thousands of cotton producers.

On these occasions, when more cotton was produced than the world would use, at even the low prices which the surpluses caused, there always resulted a business depression in the South of more or less severity, depending on how low cotton prices went. Many farmers were unable to meet their obligations and others had their mules and other equipment taken from them. Such a condition occurring every five to seven years neither makes for efficient cotton production nor for business prosperity in the South as a whole. The frequency with which these years of over-production and low prices have come has been the greatest single obstacle to the progress of southern agriculture and to the business and economic development of the whole South.

In 1926 the South produced its largest cotton crop, about 18,000,000 bales, and it sold for more than $400,000,000 less than a 16,000,000-bale crop sold the year before. Only five years later, in 1931, the second largest crop was produced, a little over 17,000,000 bales. The result was that on July 31, 1932, there was a world carryover of 13,228,000 bales of United States cotton. This meant a surplus —more than the world would take at the low average price of 5.7 cents per pound—of at least 9,000,000 bales.

Below is given the crops, prices and total value of lint of the last two crops under unrestricted production and the first two years of controlled production:

(Numbers of bales and dollars in thousands)
1931—17,095 bales at 5.7c lb. brought $487,000
1932—13,002 bales at 6.5c lb. brought 422,000
1933—13,047 bales at 9.6c lb. brought 626,000
1934— 9,634 bales at 12c lb. brought 578,000

There are those who attribute a large part of the increase in the price of cotton to the reduction in the value of the dollar, but we know that the plowing up of over 10,000,000 acres of growing cotton in 1933 immediately caused cotton prices to rise sharply. Let the causes be what they may, the cotton growers of the South know that without counting rentals and options and cash benefits they received 69 per cent more money for their crop of 1933 than for a crop of the same size in 1932. And for a crop only 70 per cent as large in 1934 they received 58 per cent more money than for the crop of 1932.

Southern business men, as well as cotton growers, also know that for the last 40 years medium to small crops of cotton in the United States have always brought them more money than crops so large that the world would not consume them. And they know, regardless of the influences affecting the prices of cotton that the more money they receive for their chief cash crop, cotton, the better are business or economic conditions. They also have learned that uncontrolled production means more cotton than the world will take at any price and that such always means reduced buying power on the part of farmers, greatly depressed business conditions and lower standards of living for all.

If the greater cash receipts from a crop no larger than the world will take at a fair price were the only benefits received from an adjustment of cotton production to meet full export and domestic needs, this alone

would make cotton production control in the United States an economic necessity. But there are other economic benefits to cotton producers of as great value as the increased cash income from cotton.

During the last 10 years, including the extreme depression years, the average world consumption of United States cotton has been 13,859,000 bales and for the last five years 12,945,000 bales. There seems no reasonable ground for doubting that during the next 5 or 10 years at least, the world will continue to use from 12 to 13 million bales of United States cotton, but assuming that the world will in the immediate future use no more than 12,000,000 bales annually of our cotton, we shall want to produce that much as soon as the present surplus is used up, for the present production program contemplates the production of every bale of cotton the world will use at a fair price.

To produce 12,000,000 bales of cotton in the past has required about 33,700,000 acres. In the future it should and almost certainly will take a smaller acreage, but assuming that for producing what cotton the world will take from us will require the use of 33,000,000 acres, that will leave about 7,000,000 acres free on which to grow other crops, which, while we were piling up a surplus that the world would not take at any price, were used for growing cotton.

It costs more to cultivate and harvest an acre of cotton—much more—than to cultivate an acre in feed crops, which we now purchase from other sections. Therefore, we will not only get more for the 12,000,000 bales of cotton than for the more than 14,414,000 bales averaged for 10 years before production adjustment was adopted, but will also have as a net profit the food and feed crops grown on 7,000,000 acres.

But that is not all, by any means, as affecting the buying power of farmers and the business interests of the South as a whole. It requires a certain amount for overhead and cash outlay to produce a pound of cotton. Assuming that it is 4 cents a pound, it may be more or less, and cotton sells for 6 cents a pound, as it did just prior to production control, then there is a margin of 2 cents a pound which may be regarded as buying power. If cotton sells for 11 cents a pound and it requires 5 cents a pound to cover overhead and cash outlay, then the buying power of a pound of cotton is 6 cents or three times as great as it was in the two years immediately preceding the inauguration of cotton production control.

But for any one living and doing business in the South no figures nor arguments are necessary to convince him that economic conditions are always very much better when medium crops of cotton are grown and a fair price received. Moreover, practically the whole South has learned that the only way a fair price for cotton can be obtained is to grow no more than the world will take at that fair price, for when surpluses are piled up prices are always depressed below cost of production. And practically the whole South has also learned that the only way production can be adjusted to world demands is by some method of forced control.

## Cotton Pickers on Strike

To the Editors of The Nation:

The July Executive Committee meeting of the Share Croppers Union decided to call a strike of the cotton pickers in central Alabama in August for the following demands: $1 per 100 pounds for picking cotton, $1 a day for 10 hours work on the farm plus room and board for monthly help and plus 2 meals and transportation for temporary help. In order to spread this strike movement of the cotton pickers the Share Croppers Union has appealed to the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the Alabama Farmers Union to unite in calling and conducting the strike.

The reader may wonder why it is necessary to strike for a measly one dollar a day and why the Negro and white farm workers, croppers, and tenants are willing to face lynch terror and persecution to carry through a strike. The answer lies in the poverty-stricken conditions of these toilers, unequaled perhaps in any other section of the United States. They slave from before sun-up until after sun-down, driven constantly by mean, gun-toting plantation bosses under a broiling sun at back-breaking toil for the magnificent sum of 35 to 60 cents a day. High prices under the AAA have made the problem of squeezing out a mere existence worse than ever. Landlord-controlled relief stations refuse relief to the majority of the workers and poor farmers, while others are forced off relief to accept jobs at the afore-mentioned wages.

In order to carry out this strike effectively a strike relief fund is very necessary. At the wages paid to the farm workers it is impossible to raise an adequate strike relief fund. Landlord-controlled relief stations refuse government relief to strikers. For these reasons we are appealing to all readers of *The Nation* to contribute to the Cotton Pickers Strike Relief Fund as generously as possible.

The Share Croppers Union conducted a cotton-choppers strike this spring, involving about 1,500 choppers, and succeeded in winning the $1 a day demand on about 35 plantations. During this strike a Negro I. L. D. organizer, J. W. Foster, was murdered by a gang of sheriffs and landlords in Dallas County, some twenty strikers were arrested and beaten, two white and one Negro union organizers were arrested and turned over to landlord gangs that "took them for a ride" and left them in the swamps brutally beaten. In spite of this terror the strikers went on to victory. In several places, when the strike was on the verge of success, the choppers were driven back to work through starvation. The relief fund was too small.

The strike will begin about the first week in August, depending on the ripening crop, and will spread to the various farming areas as bolls break into bloom. It will continue until the season is over. An accounting of the relief fund will be submitted for publication in *The Nation* upon request.

*Montgomery, Ala., July 25* Albert Jackson

# Sharecroppers Win Gains In New Adjustment Pact

### Contracts Still Lack Guarantees and Leave Loopholes for Tricking or Forcing Tenants to Sign Away Rights to Landlords

*By Len De Caux*
(Federated Press)

WASHINGTON, Dec. 4.—Southern sharecroppers and tenant farmers have at last won some concessions from the government, as a result of the strikes and protest demonstrations which have called attention to their tragic plight under the AAA program. The new cotton adjustment contracts made public yesterday provide for tenants to receive a larger share of benefit checks than heretofore. They also make it possible for a sharecropper to receive his check direct, instead of through the landlord.

The contracts are still full of loopholes, however, in the opinion of Washington farm experts who have aided the organized tenant farmers in the past. There are still many ways in which landlords may continue to cheat tenants of their benefits, as in the past, they point out; and there is still no real protection against tenants being forced off the land so that landlords may get more of the benefits.

**Given Larger A. A. A. Benefit**

The new contracts provide merely that landlords must agree, "insofar as is economicaly practicable," to keep the same number of tenants or sharecroppers that were kept the preceding year. Such a provision in the old contracts has been of little effect in saving sharecroppers from eviction.

The different proportion of benefits which is supposed to go to landlords and tenants hereafter, is shown by taking a farm with total benefit payment of $100. In 1935 the landlord's share was $85; the sharecropper's, $15. Under the new contract the division for 1936 would be $75 to the landlord and $25 to the sharecropper. The share received by non-managing and managing share tenants is also increased.

**Guarantee Lacking**

The joker for the sharecropper, however, is that landlords have managed to pocket most of the cropper's smaller share in the past, and there is no guarantee in the new contracts that they will not also pocket most of the larger share now allotted to him.

A recent F. E. R. A. survey of landlord-tenant relations and relief in Alabama showed the huge extent of sharecropper indebtedness, real and alleged (the landlord keeps the books). It concluded that the sharecroppers investigated "had profited little financially from Agricultural Adjustment payments since the bulk of the money received had passed on to the landlords in 60 per cent of the cases."

**Show Need of Union**

In the past benefit checks have gone to the landlords, who have deducted payment of debts which they state are owed, before letting sharecroppers have their share. In many cases the unfortunate tenant has been cheated out of what was coming to him. Often the landlord is also the store-owner and holds onto much of the cropper's share in that way.

The new contract is an improvement in that it provides for direct payment of his share of benefits to the sharecropper, unless he signs away that right. Checks are to be made out direct, the A. A. A. ruling states, unless the tenant or cropper "designates a joint payee of such check, in which case such check shall be drawn payable jointly to the tenant or cropper and designated joint payee."

Where organizations like the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the Sharecroppers Union are strong, the croppers may be able to take advantage of the direct payment provision to get their rights, union sympathizers point out. But elsewhere, they say, landlords are likely to order, force or trick tenants into signing the joint payee forms, and then continue to pocket most of the croppers' share on one pretext or another, as in the past.

General.

Agriculture—1935
Labor Conditions.

# Share-Croppers' Plight

## *Southern Baptist Convention's Sympathy Is Aroused*

6-1-35

The plight of the Southern share-cropper came before the Southern Baptist Convention at Memphis, arousing sympathy, but no immediate action, tho, if reports are true, said Dr. Edwin McNeill Poteat, Jr., of Raleigh, "two-thirds of the abused probably are Baptists."

If they were Baptists, Doctor Poteat said, he was interested in finding out if all their complaints were true, and he urged the establishment of a research agency for that purpose.

However, under the rules of the church, such an agency could not be set up at this session, and action was postponed until the next convention.

### Injustice Cited

6-1-35

In his appeal, Doctor Poteat, who is an author, preacher, and former missionary in China, recited that "there have been complaints of railroading of suspects, complaints of the Scottsboro Case, complaints of every conceivable injustice done in the name of profit. These complaints touch every point of our Baptist belief—the question of personal and religious freedom—and every human right."

The convention also heard Dr. Joseph Martin Dawson, of Waco, Texas, who said it was reported that in his "own State there are farm-owners who work their tenants on the halves, require them to buy all supplies at exorbitant prices, and charge the legal interest in addition, thus reducing these tenants to virtual peons.

"Some of these men profess to believe in the true Gospel, by which they mean they give mental assent to a creed which assures them of escape from a burning hell after death, but may ignore social justice here and live like the devil."

The convention responded by adopting a resolution expressing "deep concern for social justice for all individuals and groups." It was added as an amendment to the report of the Social Service Commission denouncing war, lynchings, the liquor traffic, motion-pictures which depict crime and vice in an "alluring manner," and reaffirming devotion to the principle of the "separation of Church and State."

Dr. John Richard Sampey, of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, succeeded Dr. Monroe Elmon Dodd, of Shreveport, as President.

Memphis, Tenn., Com'rcial Appeal
May 18, 1935

# SHARECROPPER PROBE DELAYED BY BAPTISTS

## Poteat Urges Bureau of Social Research

## CONDEMN CRIME MOVIES

### Denomination Spurns Federal Funds for Churches—Attacks Liquor—Selects St. Louis for Next Convention

Application of federal funds to churches, economic injustices and motion pictures which depict vice and crime were deplored by the Southern Baptist Convention yesterday as it deferred action for one year on a proposal to create a bureau of social research.

The convention reaffirmed its condemnation of liquor traffic and declared its "unalterable opposition" to war and lynching.

Attacking the liquor policy of government—federal, state and local—in another resolution, the convention condemned "unjustifiable perversion and prostitution of governmental power."

**Sharp Debates**

Several times during the day the body was thrown into an uproar by sharp differences of opinion among the speakers. Late in the afternoon the convention voted down Memphis and New Orleans in favor of St. Louis for the next annual meeting.

In recommending during the morning session the creation of a bureau of social research, Dr. E. McNeill Poteat, Jr., Raleigh, N. C., urged investigation of southern sharecropper conditions. The recommendation aroused spirited debate.

Later in the afternoon, the convention adopted the report of the powerful social service commission, presented by Dr. Arthur J. Barton, Wilmington, N. C., chairman, containing an amendment expressing "deep concern for social justice for all individuals and groups." The resolutions on liquor, war, lynching and application of public funds to churches were contained in this report.

**Peonage in Texas**

An amendment to the report was introduced by Dr. J. M. Dawson, of Waco, Texas, who made an impassioned plea for its adoption. He said:

"It is reported that in my own state, there are valley farm owners who work their tenants on halves, require them to buy all supplies at exhorbitant prices and charge the legal interest in addition, thus reducing these tenants to virtual peons.

"Some of these men," he added, profess to believe in the true gospel, by which they mean they give mental assent to a creed which assures them of escape from a burning hell after death, but may ignore social justice here and live like the devil."

**Huff Next Keynoter**

Dr. John A. Huff of New Orleans was selected to give the convention sermon at the next annual meeting.

"Political leaders, and in some instances even religious leaders, seem to have lost their way concerning some of the basic principles of Ameriacn life and institutions . . ." Dr. Barton said in making his report.

"Among the surprising and disquieting proposals . . . is that of having the government intervene in the realm of religion by extending financial aid to churches and other religious institutions," the social service commission chairman said.

He named proposals to have the FHA indorse loans up to $2,000 to churches and of giving assistance to clerics from work relief funds.

"Whenever the government becomes the sponsor for religion, financial or other, the freedom of religion comes to an end. . . . Baptists have suffered too much from freedom of conscience to be willing to barter their freedom for a mess of financial gain or political pottage," Dr. Barton said as the audience vigorously applauded.

Heated debate was crystallized at the close of the morning session, in which Dr. Poteat hurled charges against the Supreme Court of the United States, state and federal governments and newspapers, in recommending a social research bureau free from interference of any agency in the convention.

"I have received information that there are today in Memphis 20 families in exile from Poinsett County, Ark," Dr. Poteat said. "Exiles from injustice across the Mississippi River, their lives in danger for trying to organize a sharecroppers union. Two-thirds of those people are Baptists. As a Baptist, I am interested in that."

**Pleads For Sharecroppers**

Applause swept the convention as the 40-year-old progressive minister took the plight of the sharecroppers to point out the need of Baptist leadership in a far-reaching social program.

"Our strength is largely rural," Dr. Poteat continued. "In the past 10 years 200,000 families have passed from landowners to sharecroppers. That affects every aspect of southern culture. Dispossessing people of their land directly affects the income of every Baptist preacher. The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company benefits more by the AAA than any other, because it owns more land in the south. Bankhead's bill for relief of the sharecroppers was stopped by a political trick. It was the first genuine social legislation introduced in behalf of the farmer.

"We must have our facts from sources not tainted by propaganda, so we may correct abuses. I do not know the truth of the situation in Poinsett County, Ark.; the Scottsboro case in Alabama; Angelo Herndon in Atlanta, nor of the textile workers slain by militia in Honeapath, S. C."

**Hurt Interrupts**

At this point Dr. John Jeter Hurt, president of Union University of Jackson, Tenn., rose to a point of order.

"We have a brilliant speaker here, But what else?" Dr. Hurt demanded. "Of what value is this? I have heard no report."

President Dodd faced a dozen delegates demanding recognition. The Rev. E. D. Solomon of Jacksonville, Fla., rose to a point of order.

"The program committee alloted this man time for a speech and a report, and we want to hear it," he shouted.

President Dodd ruled that he still had seven minutes to make a report. Dr. Poteat completed his speech.

Dr. Hurt was again recognized by the chair.

"The eloquence of this great speech will be gone after a while," he said. "Dr. Poteat's brilliant mind will not be operative in every nook and corner of the south. According to Article 14 of the constitution 'no new enterprise shall be authorized except by recommendation of the board or agency that shall have responsibility of raising the fund or by the convention in two successive meetings. Article 14 gives us no right to consider it.'"

Dr. A. J. Barton rose to praise the speech as "the most profoundly scholarly and able address the convention has ever heard." He pointed out that only two main issues were involved: The question of enlarging expenditures in social service, or considering a separate agency through which enlargement would be heard.

A motion for adjournment was voted down and the Rev. J. J. Wicker, of Fort Union, Va., addressed the convention.

"If this bureau is established I hope it will not be controlled by partisan reason or a one-sided mind," he said.

President Dodd ruled that since the funds for the social research were to come from the Sunday school board, and that since this board had not seen fit to pass on the resolution, the proposal could not come before the convention until next year.

Dr. J. W. Lee, of Batesville, Miss., was recognized by the chair.

"When our government was founded our great leaders wisely thought fit to separate church and state and accord us religious freedom," Dr. Lee said. "Now not satisfied with religious freedom, we are attempting to run the government. I move to postpone this matter one year."

**Man From Each State**

Dr. John A. Davidson, of Clarksville, Tenn., moved to enlarge the commission for a more thorough report. His motion was amended by Dr. F. F. McConnell, of Dallas, Texas, to include one man from each state.

Among the other social injustices charged by Dr. Poteat in his speech were the paying of poll taxes by large landowners to bring about laws favorable to them rather than to the sharecroppers; the supreme court removing the right of free judgment by forcing men to go to war, and numerous sedition bills now pending in Congress.

The morning sermon was delivered by Dr. George W. Truett, of the First Baptist Church of Dallas, who attended the Baptist convention 44 years ago when the Sunday school board was launched.

Calling the printed page man's greatest mechanical invention, Dr. Truett pointed out how it makes man heir to all the centuries.

"Wisdom has fled from us as Baptists if we do not make more of our denominational papers," he said. "The printed page should have stress and emphasis as never before. We must overcome bad with good. Fads and fancies flood the land like the Egyptian plague of frogs. Germany's decline came about because of the prevalence of the wrong kind of literature."

**Sunday School Report**

The report of the Sunday school board was made by Dr. T. L. Holcomb, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, and Dr. I. J. Van Ness, whom Dr. Holcomb succeeds in June as executive secretary and treasurer of the board, were presented.

Th home mission board report was made last night by Dr. J. B. Lawrence, executive secretary and treasurer. John T. Henderson, of Nashville, presented the Baptist Brotherhood report.

Support to the proposal that Memphis be named the permanent meeting place of the convention was given by the Rev. J. G. Early, Oklahoma City, former pastor of the Seventh Street Baptist Church, Memphis, and Will Upshaw, Atlanta, ex-congressman.

Stating that Memphis was best suited, geographically, for being host to the convention, Mr. Upshaw added, "I'm in favor of coming here till the judgment day."

**Sustain Willingham**

The report of the committee on boards was turned down yesterday afternoon with instructions that the committee make several changes in recommendations for positions on the various boards.

The Rev. L. E. Lamb, Nevada, Mo., opposed the naming of the Rev. E. B. Willingham, son of Dr. R. J. Willingham, former Memphis pastor, to succeed Dr. J. F. Vines as member of the board from Missouri. A vote was called and the change was sustained.

In postponing action on the proposal that a social research bureau be created, the convention voted that the social service research committee be enlarged.

The original members of the committee, Dr. Poteet, Ryland Knight, Atlanta; Dr. Davison, Clarksville, Tenn., and Dr. J. B. Weatherspoon, Louisville, Ky., were retained.

The additional members are A. J. Dickinson, Alabama; J. Thomas Gillespie, Arkansas; R. W. Weaver, Washington; C. M. Rock, Arizona; F. C. McConnell, Florida; Spright Dowell, Georgia; Tom Roberts, Illinois; A. W. Parish, Kentucky; Everett Gill, Jr., Louisiana; E. W. Saylor, Maryland; J. H. Street, Mississippi; H. I. Hester, Missouri; J. F. Nix, New Mexico; Arch McMillan, North Carolina; Tom Wiles, Oklahoma; Marshall Mott, South Carolina; Merrell Moore, Tennessee; G. L. Yates, Texas, and Henry Alford Porter, Virginia.

Dr. John R. Sampey, incoming president, announced the committee on boards for 1935:

W. P. Binns, Virginia, chairman; J. M. Thomas, Alabama; Reuben Smith, Arizona; C. B. Waller, Arkansas; John E. Briggs, Washington; F. C. McConnell, Florida; Ellis A. Fuller, Georgia; Lemuel Hall, Illinois; J. A. Gaines, Kentucky; Everett Gill., Jr., Louisiana; F. A. Davis, Maryland; L. G. Gates, Mississippi; W. E. Denham, Missouri; C. R. Barrick, New Mexico; C. M. Townsend, North Carolina; Chesterfield Turner, Oklahoma; D. I. Purser, South Carolina; J. F. Jarman, Tennessee, and J. W. Dawson, Texas.

The convention will close at noon today. Reports of the committees on resolutions, chaplains of the army and navy, national Baptist memorial and American Baptist Historical Society and the hospital and education commission will be given today.

# Footlights and Flickers

BY HARRY MARTIN

SOONER or later it was bound to happen. Some would-be dramatic Moses was bound to write a play based on the landlord-sharecropper situation in the south.

The deed is done at last. I hear the play is actually going to see the lights of Broadway. And, recalling the manner in which New York's provincials took "Tobacco Road" unto their supercilious bosoms, I fear this tenant farm drama is due to be a hit.

Written by one L. Lamb, who no doubt has never been any further south than the Battery or west than Jersey City, the play is entitled "Sharecroppers Unite."

It will be produced by an organization known as the New York Theater which has five other plays, all definitely radical, in readiness for the footlights.

The advance notice concerning the play carries this descriptive paragraph concerning its contents:

"Negro and white sharecroppers, brought together by their common hunger and the leadership of a young negro from the north, save him from lynching at the hands of the vicious white landlords."

It is a pity, of course, that such matter can be dragged upon the stage to give our northern friends a distorted view of the whole southern agricultural picture.

However, there seems to be nothing to be done about it except hope that a kind Providence and the vicissitudes of fortune will keep "Sharecroppers Unite" from purveying its poison for any great length of time.

TENANT FARMERS UNION CALLS GENERAL STRIKE

MEMPHIS, Tenn.-(CNA)- A general strike of all cotton pickers working on a day labor basis has been called by the Southern Tenants Farmers Union. The strike front will cover three states, Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma.

The main demand will be for $1 per hundred pounds of cotton picked, H.L. Mitchell, executive secretary, stated. The walkout would become effective at the call of strike committees, he added.

"Answers to the questionnaires showed that wages offered this year for cotton picking are from 50 to 60 cents per hundred", Mitchell said. Sharecroppers and tenant members will pick their own cotton, he explained, "but in the event that they hire themselves and families out on a day labor basis, they will ask the union wage of $1 per hundred pounds."

Sharecroppers Unions Unite

Recently, a united front agreement between the Tenants Farmers Union and Sharecroppers Union of Alabama was concluded in Washington, D.C. for joint strike action. The Sharecroppers Union is at present leading a strike of cotton pickers in Alabama.

The Southern Tenants Farmers Union has earned a reputation for militancy and has been the target of landlord and police violence. Last Spring, meetings of its Negro and white members were raided by landlord vigilante gangs aided by deputy sheriffs and speakers arrested on trumped-up anarchy charges.

Several union leaders have been murdered by these gangs.

Agriculture - 1935

Labor Conditions.

General.

# AAA AIMS AT AN END TO SHARE CROPPING

Times

## Plans Afoot in Washington to Replace System Existing Since Slavery Went Out.

4-22-35

## LAND BUYING BEING AIDED

## High Officials Keen to Abuses and Are Speeding the Wide Program of Relief.

By F. RAYMOND DANIELL.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, April 21.—The condition of the share-croppers of the Cotton Belt has not escaped the attention of the planners in President Roosevelt's administration. Steps are being taken now to bring immediate relief to this distressed class of tenant farmer and eventually to eliminate a system of farming that has existed in the South since slavery was abolished.

Dr. Calvin B. Hoover, Professor of Economics at Duke University and economic adviser in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, who made a survey of conditions on the cotton plantations under the acreage reduction program for Secretary Wallace, reported that the share-cropper had not shared equally with the landlord in government benefits.

To win cotton planters to the crop reduction plan, he said, it was deemed necessary to divide the benefits between landlord and tenant on a ratio of eight to one, and even then, he pointed out, the owner of a cotton plantation receives proportionally less from the government for retiring his surplus acres from cultivation than does a tobacco farmer who signs a contract with the Secretary of Agriculture.

### Conclusion of Report.

Asserting that the landlord was "induced to sign the cotton contract by an inducement obtained at the expense of the share-tenant and share-cropper," Dr. Hoover concluded his report with these words:

"The standard of living which results from a situation in which an entire family depends for its income on half of the product of some fifteen acres of cotton cannot be corrected by the present program of acreage reduction. The program was never intended to do so, of course.

"It is plainly the duty of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, however, to spare no effort in preventing the unequal distribution of the advantages of the acreage reduction program, and particularly to prevent the operation of that program from making the situation of any class of producers worse."

As one step toward equalizing the benefits of the "Three A's," county agents have been instructed to pay greater attention to enforcing that section of the contract which provides that share-croppers have the free use of the acres rented to the government for the raising of food and feed for their own use in exchange for labor.

Recently also the AAA has undertaken a survey in collaboration with FERA to determine the exact amount of unemployment which has resulted from the reduction of cotton acreage. Only one county—Johnson County, in North Carolina—has reported thus far, but there the survey indicated that only twenty-five families had been driven off the land and onto the relief rolls.

### Return to Farms Found.

In his preliminary report to J. Phil Campbell, chief of the Division of Agricultural Rehabilitation of the AAA, C. H. Hamilton, State Supervisor of Rural Research in North Carolina, said that 1935 showed an increase in the number of share croppers, tenants, laborers and owners on farms in Johnson County. The report declared:

"On ninety-six owner farms which we surveyed, only fifty-eight having 116 tenants, it was found that forty tenant, cropper and laborer families had moved to these farms at the beginning of 1935, making a net increase of twenty-three families, or about 20 per cent in the number of non-owning families of fifty-eight farms."

There still is a great amount of unemployment among the rural population of the South, however. To alleviate the distress among the tenant farmers who have been displaced hundreds of rehabilitation farms have been set up by the FERA and the Department of Agriculture. Mr. Campbell estimated that of the 150,000 families who are tenants of Uncle Sam more than half are in the cotton-producing States, with the largest number in Arkansas.

These farms are on land rented by the government. The tenants are financed and equipped by the government with the teams and tools necessary to make a crop. They are encouraged to grow food and feed for themselves and their stock and they are carefully supervised by agents of the government. The land is leased to them with an option to buy it on easy terms.

### Two Criticisms of Plan.

Two criticisms of this plan are heard frequently. One is that, in leasing land on which to rehabilitate farm families on relief, the government sometimes has displaced self-supporting families already on the land. The other is that on such projects as the Dyess Community, which is expected to provide acreage for 700 families, the government is saddling prospective purchasers with a debt greater than the property can earn.

This correspondent, during a recent survey in Northeastern Arkansas, was taken to see one of the rehabilitation farms near Trumann, from which several families were dispossessed to make room for families on relief. Mr. Campbell admitted that such "mistakes" sometimes occur, but, he said, they usually resulted from carelessness by local officials.

The Dyess Community is a large tract in Mississippi County, in Northeastern Arkansas, on which the government has constructed homes for some 700 farm families. These houses, built by carpenters, plumbers and other artisans from the relief rolls, are far superior to the usual home of the share-cropper of the section.

Mr. Campbell, who is the owner of a Georgia cotton plantation which provides employment for sixty-five families of share-croppers, said he sometimes wondered if, in constructing homes with all modern conveniences, the government was not killing with kindness the people it was trying to help. There is a limit to what a given number of acres can earn, he said.

### Seen As Hope for Cure.

Yet it is through just such projects as this that persons who have studied the problem of the share cropper see the possibility of a cure for a system of farming which reduces a large portion of the population to a condition not much better than peonage. The large plantations must be broken up and the government must take the leadership in effecting a transition from tenantry back to land ownership, these observers say, if the evils of the share cropping system are to be eliminated.

It is to accomplish this end that Senator Bankhead of Alabama recently introduced his bill for a Farm Tenant Homes Corporation "to promote more secure occupancy of farms and farm homes, to correct the economic instability resulting from some present forms of farm tenancy, and for other purposes."

The corporation would be authorized to lend tenant farmers and share croppers the money to buy farms and farm equipment, allowing the purchasers of such farms to amortize their debt over a thirty to fifty year period at as low a rate of interest as that at which the corporation can obtain money plus a small charge for administration. The corporation would be empowered to sell stock not to exceed $100,000,000 to the Secretary of the Treasury and issue bonds not to exceed $1,000,000,000 to obtain funds to carry out its purposes.

### Endorsed by Wallace.

This bill has the endorsement of Secretary Wallace. A week ago last Saturday, in an address at Atlanta, he said, in defending the acreage reduction program:

"Solution of the problems of tenantry and share cropping is not to be found in discarding a program which has meant substantially larger cotton income to divide among the farmers, but rather in agricultural and industrial recovery, restoration of two-way foreign trade, and in such measures as the pending Bankhead bill."

In another part of the speech he declared:

"I have wholeheartedly endorsed the statesmanlike proposal of Senator Bankhead, now pending in Congress, for government leadership in encouraging a transition from tenantry back to land ownership. I do not know a better way to approach the problem, and I am not leaving out of account the possibilities for improving the effectiveness of provisions in our own programs designed to minimize labor disturbance."

That this "effectiveness" can be improved, few in the Secretary's own department would deny. In his report Dr. Hoover said that "various undesirable effects and instances of hardships to individuals" were due in some cases to "the nature of the cotton contract itself, sometimes to its misinterpretation and sometimes to its violation." He listed four "undesirable effects," as follows:

"1. There have been a considerable number of cases in which tenant farmers have not received the full amount specified by the 1933 cotton contract.

### Enforcement Held Inadequate.

"2. The operation of the acreage reduction program creates a motive for reducing the number of tenants on farms. The acreage reduction contracts have within them provisions designed to prevent this motive having effect, but the system of enforcement of these provisions has been inadequate.

"3. The percentage of the rental payments paid to share tenants and share croppers for land withdrawn from cultivation in accordance with the 1934 cotton contracts is less than in other contracts.

"4. The way in which the 1934 cotton contract has been drawn has produced considerable confusion in the classification of types of tenantry. Upon this classification the division of benefit payments by government between landowner and tenant depends."

It was these factors, according to Mr. Campbell, which were largely responsible for the deluge of complaints which poured in upon AAA when the acreage reduction contracts became operative. Records of the Department of Agriculture show that between May 10, 1934, and Jan. 1, 1935, 6,200 complaints were received. Most of them, Mr. Campbell said, came from Arkansas, where the Southern Tenant Farmers Union was organized by Socialist leaders.

Of the total number of complaints received, 2,299 were investigated by a special adjustment committee. Of this number 1,654 were found to be "unjustified," 219 cases were adjusted by field representatives of the department and 401 cases by county committees. There were twenty-five cases in which no adjustment could be made and in which cancellation of the contract was recommended.

# SENATE SIDETRACKS FARM TENANT BILL

## Recommits the Billion-Dollar Measure on Borah Motion for Delay to May 12.

Times

## FOR A CURB ON WALLACE

4-25-35

## House Committee Strikes From AAA Bill His Power to License Retailers.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, April 24.—After a week spent in meeting every attempt to modify or in other ways amend the bill appropriating a billion to give lands to farm tenants, the Senate today voted 45 to 38 to sidetrack the measure by sending it back to committee with instructions that it be reported before May 12.

The vote, on a motion by Senator Borah, followed an unsuccessful attempt by Senator Bailey to reduce from $1,000,000,000 to $100,000,000, the amount of bonds that could be issued by a proposed farmers' home corporation to finance ten-

ants anad share-croppers in acquiring farmsteads, which in many cases they now operate. The amendment was rejected 39 to 34.

The Agricultural Committee of the House voted again to report the controversial administration amendments to the Agricultural Adjustment Act after it had stricken from the bill provisions authorizing Secretary Wallace to license retail outlets for farm products, if necessary to make effective the proposed marketing agreements or plans with producers.

Also deleted was a section requiring approval of at least two-thirds of producers by number or volume of production before licenses or marketing agreements could be imposed that would limit the amount of any commodity permitted to be purchased from parties to such agreements or licenses.

**Bars Milk License.**

By striking out the authority to impose licenses on retailers, the committee made it highly improbable that the AAA will attempt to negotiate any marketing agreement between milk producers and distributers, including that projected for the five Northeastern States embracing New York.

By the same stroke the committee deprived the AAA of the club it has heretofore wielded over milk distributors and which it has contended was essential if existing agreements were to remain. If the bill containing the amendments is passed in its present form, Committee members agreed, the licenses could be imposed only on wholesaling and then only with doubtful legality.

The proposed amendments were also discussed on the Senate floor in the debate on the farm tenancy bill when Senator Byrd asked Senator Smith whether it was not a fact that under the AAA bill, as introduced the Secretary of Agriculture would be empowered to prescribe the amount of strawberries that might be marketed by a small farmer in the Shenandoah Valley.

Senator Smith agreed that this was so but said he would be prepared to offer an amendment to the bill making that impossible.

The amendments now provide that no farmer may be licensed "in his capacity as a producer" and only in cases where the producer is at the same time a distributor of a sufficient volume of production as to have an effect on the market.

Chairman Smith of the committee that favorably reported the meaure to the Senate said it was "ridiculously absurd." He termed the bill an effort by the AAA to get tenants and share-croppers back on farms at an even faster rate than they had been put off as a result of the cotton reduction program. The measure lost the support of many Senators, including Messrs. Copeland and Tydings, who prefer to see the program started off with a more modest sum.

## EXPLOITATION OF SHARE-CROPPER.

The status of the colored and white share cropper in the South is practically that of a peon, in the opinion of two trained and impartial observers, who have been sent to study the subject objectively. F. Raymond Daniell of The New York Times distinguished himself for fairness in reporting the Scottsboro trials. Erskine Caldwell, writing for The New York Post, author of "Tobacco Road," was born in the South. Accompanied by his father, the Rev. I. Caldwell of Wrens, Ga., he recently visited Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi.

4-27-35

Most of Mr. Daniel's travels took him chiefly through Arkansas, where the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, which has a white and colored membership, has aroused the fury of plantation owners and public officials. Because they joined the union, share-croppers were run off their farms and subjected to various forms of violence. Night riders, with the sanction of the peace officers, have perpetrated outrage after outrage to preserve the old, decadent order of things.

Mr. Daniell tells of one psalm-singer and minister of the gospel, a Rev. J. Abner Sage, pastor of the First Methodist Church of Marked Tree, Ark., who, in the name of the Lord, preaches race hatred and bigotry, and works religiously in the interest of the land barons. This gentleman of the cloth is quoted as saying share-croppers are a shiftless lot with only themselves to blame if they are not successful. He waxes wroth over Northern organizers addressing Negroes as "Mister" and shaking hands with them, which he thinks gives them ideas about "social equality."

It is related that "on March 30, an armed band of vigilantes mobbed a group of Negro men and women returning home from church, beating several of them with pistol butts and flashlights. The same night in an adjoining town of Lepanto, night-riders shot out all the lights in a Negro church, terrorizing the men, women and children of the congregation." The sanctimonious "Brother Sage" and his allies condone this reign of terror.

Mr. Caldwell openly accuses landlords of dishonesty toward tenants in the South, declaring some Negroes never receive relief as provided by FERA; also that relief clothes are sold to Negroes and interest charged. One Mississippi landowner is quoted as saying: "My 'niggers' earn their keep. I pay them $10 a month and that's all they get except house rent. I start them in the fields in the morning in plenty of time for them to get ready to start plowing by sun-up and I keep them there until after the sun goes down."

The following is reported coming from the lips of a Mississippi Negro tenant: "The white folks tell me I'd sure to get all that's coming to me at the proper time, but when I waited to get my pay the boss at the plantation said: 'God damn you, nigger, don't you never ask for nothing unless I speak about it first.' "

Any student of history knows full well that such intolerable conditions as faithfully depicted by Messrs. Daniell and Caldwell cannot continue for long. Ruthless exploitation of the share-cropper does not fit into the nation's present economic structure. Symptomatic of the times is the organization of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union with a mixed membership. Since the Civil War white and colored workers in the South have been kept divided by such malevolent influences as "Brother Sage," whose rantings about the separation of races and "social equality" have fostered ill will and suspicion preventing cooperation between the two groups for mutual economic betterment.

The New York Times correspondent tells of having visited under cover of night a cabin where colored and white sympathizers of the movement, hounded by officers of the law and plantation owners were living together. They are comrades in dire distress and fully realize if they are to improve their lot it will not be by setting up racial barriers but by cooperation, understanding and good will.

# MACHINE TO PICK COTTON INVENTED

## End Of Sharecropper Problem Is Predicted As Result; Put On Display

MEMPHIS, TENN., May 4.—(AP)—Two brothers, with memories of tired backs and sore knees from picking cotton on a farm back in Texas, stood beside a 2,100-pound machine today, and announced, "she's ready."

The brothers—John D. and Mack D. Rust—smiled as they announced a dream come true—a mechanical cotton picker they believe will do the work of from 50 to 100 men.

Experimental models have been shown by the Rust brothers before agricultural experiment stations and at their business here—but the new model, practically the same as it will look when it is placed on the market in 1936 will make its debut for the general public during the national cotton show here next week, May 6-11.

The brothers expect to go into production soon.

The machine consist primarily of an endless belt carrying several hundred smooth wire spindles. As it passes over the row of cotton, the rotating spindles automatically moistened, penetrate the plants. The moisture causes the open cotton to adhere to the rotating spindles and be wrapped around them and pulled from the burr. The cotton then is stripped from the spindles and delivered by a suction fan to the container.

The machine will cover about an acre an hour. The new pull-model can be pulled and powered by an ordinary row-crop farm tractor, being hitched or unhitched, freeing it for other work. (The price tentatively fixed is $995 F.O.B. factory.)

John D., who first had the dream of a mechanical picker, says that it costs approximately one-fourth of the value of cotton to pay for its harvesting by hand and that often thousands of bales are left in the fields because of lack of help. The new machine, he says, can be operated at a cost of 98 cents an acre and that cotton can be harvested with in on an average of about one-fifth the cost of hand-picking.

In 1931, a bulletin issued by the Delta Experiment Station, Stoneville, Miss. said:

"Mechanical pickers will make possible a reduction of 75 per cent in operating labor, reduced housing and other overhead expenses, and profitable cotton production again."

The Rust brothers believe drastic and sudden readjustments of social relations will come as a result of mechanical harvesting.

"The sharecropper system of the old South will have to be abandoned," says John D. Rust. "The wheat industry could not have progressed to its present proportions with the use of the hand sickle."

The brothers were born on a cotton farm 13 miles southeast of Breckenbridge, Stephens County, Texas.

Georgia

Agriculture — 1935

Labor Conditions

COTTON PICKING PRICES

Much complaint is now being made because of the reported dearth of cotton pickers. There is a cause for this scarcity and it is a very just one. Picking cotton is one of the most arduous tasks on the farm. It is performed in a sun that is beaming and the hotter it is the harder the pickers have to work. The hours of these pickers are from sun up to sun down. For this arduous task the laborers are in most instances, given only forty cents a day. They are rebelling; can any considerate person blame them for doing so? This is why it is so very difficult for the farm owners to secure the service of pickers. Because these pickers refuse to work for this miserly sum, they are denoted as being shiftless and lazy. Pleas are being made for better pay. In an organized way a demand is made for a pay of one dollar per day. This is small enough and should be readily given.

Agriculture—1935

Tennessee

Labor Conditions

# PLANTERS RECEIVE 7-POINT PETITION

the Pittsburg Courier

7-27-35

Pittsburg, Penn.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., July 25 — (ANP) — Leaders of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, composed of Negro and white sharecroppers, have recently made a seven-point demand upon planters in the cotton states where organization of the Union is proceeding apace, under the skillful direction of Ward Rodgers and E. B. McKinney.

The seven points are:

1. That no sharecropper or laborer and his family, be without decent clothing, food, fuel and shelter.

2. That no sharecropper hereafter shall be overcharged for furnished goods or cheated and outfigured out of his weights and earnings.

3. That killings of sharecroppers be stopped and murderers arrested, tried and convicted under the death penalty.

4. That wages for cotton chopping be at the rate of 10 cents per hour.

5. That no sharecropper or his family have to die for want of medical attention.

6. That the planters and the authorities respect the constitutional right of the sharecroppers to organize, to freedom of speech and assembly and to the right of petition to the government for the redress of grievances; and that all terror, brutality and false imprisonment be stopped.

7. That hereafter the planters recognize the sharecropper Union and the right of collective bargaining.

## *Sharecroppers' Union Totals 15,000*

MEMPHIS, Tenn., July 25—(ANP)—The executive council of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union announced as of July 1 that 11,700 white and colored sharecroppers had joined the Union, exclusive of the total membership of the American Farm and Farm Laborers Union, reported at 3,300.

A total of $701.83 was paid into the national office from Sept. 1, 1934 to July 1, 1935. National officers received no salaries.

# Two Southern Farm Unions Near Merger

## Tenant Farmers' and Sharecroppers' Union Committee Meet

Daily Worker New York N.Y. 8-16-35

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Aug. 15.—Plans to amalgamate the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the Share Croppers Union are being worked out by a joint committee of the two unions, and will be submitted to a referendum of the membership in the near future, according to a joint announcement made today by representatives of both organizations.

The amalgamation would unite 26,000 organized sharecroppers, tenants and poor farmers, and prepare the ground for the rapid organization of the entire cotton region, the joint statement said.

The statement which was signed by H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, and Albert Jackson, secretary of the Share Croppers Union, declared in part:

"The destitute conditions of the southern sharecroppers and tenants are not being bettered by the A. A. A. or the Bankhead Act. These conditions are maintained by landlord terror that is paralleled only by the murder regime of Hitler in Germany.

"These facts emphasize the necessity of a powerful organization to unite the white and Negro toilers of the cotton fields in a determined struggle to better these conditions and regain the civil rights so long denied the toilers of this impoverished section of the United States."

Texas.

Agriculture - 1935

Labor Conditions.

# Sharecroppers of Texas Facing Starvation, Claim

Austin, Tex., (CNA)—With the end of the cotton-picking season, thousands of Negro workers and sharecroppers face starvation in this state.

The suspension of direct relief after Nov. 15. leaves approximately half of the Negroes of Texas to depend upon the doubtful mercies of local community chests.

These red tape organizations will, in turn shun the load to relatives who may have small pay jobs. It has been the established policy of Texas relief agencies to allow Negroes only fifty per cent as much relief as whites.

The suspension of relief is especially diabolical when one considers that Negroes are being driven increasingly from the land as a result of the cotton reduction program. These dispossessed tenants have, in many cases, emigrated to the towns in hopes of finding employment. In many cases, they have been conscripted on brutal chain gangs for being 'vagrants."